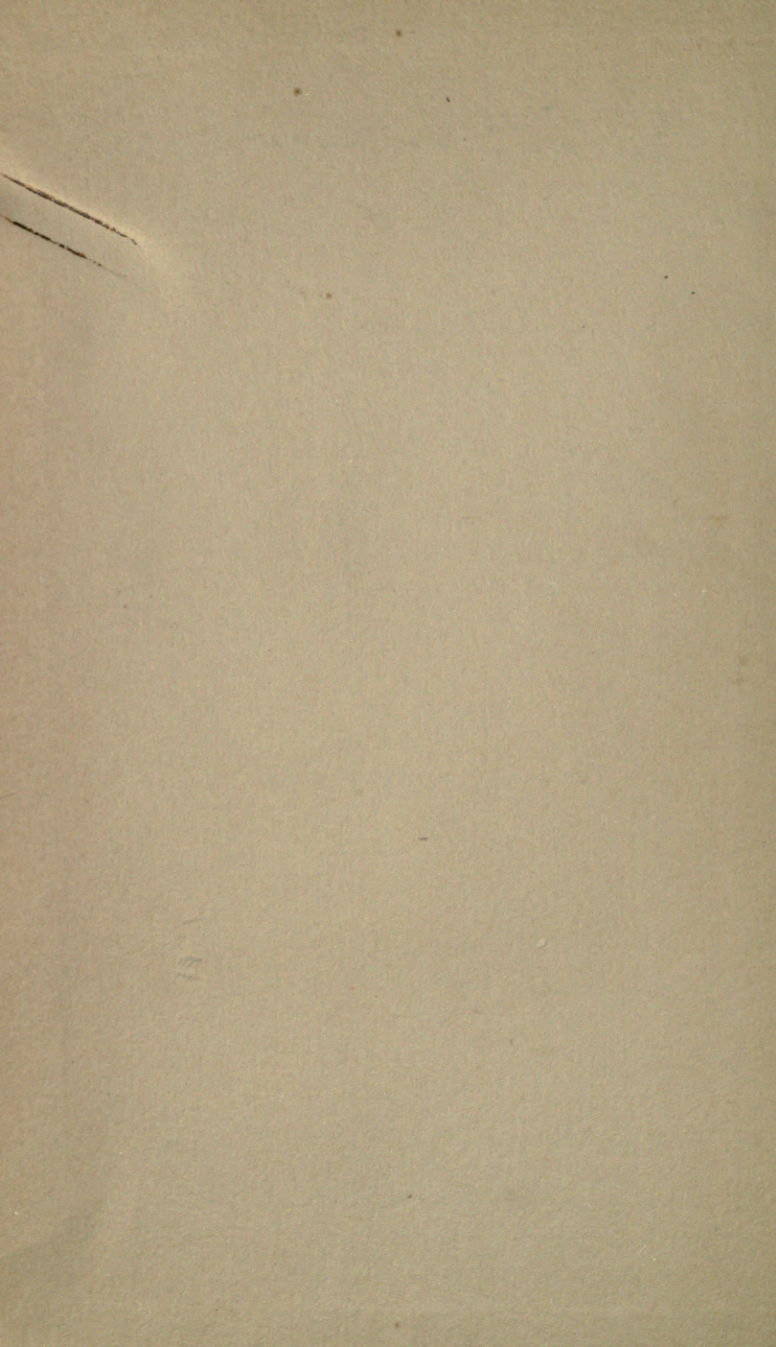


HYDE PARK

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C. K. OGDEN

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HYDE PARK.



SELECT NARRATIVES, ANNUAL EVENTS, ETC.,

During twenty years' Police Service in Hyde Park,

by

EX-SERGT. EDWARD OWEN.



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PREFACE.

IN introducing this little book to the Public, I hope my Readers will kindly accept it in the simple language of a man of limited education.

There is a saying, I believe, that "Truth is stranger than Fiction,"—consequently, as the few narratives I have selected in these pages are the truth, I venture to hope it may enliven the interest and make a little amends for absence of literary eloquence.

Your humble Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

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HYDE PARK.

HYDE PARK! There is only one Hyde Park, that is to say, there is possibly no other so universally acknowledged as Hyde Park, London. It is familiar to both old and young, rich and poor—not only to Londoners, but to visitors from all parts of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, to say nothing of America and Continental countries—who visit us annually, and all—or mostly all—come to Hyde Park to see Society and Fashion. But my object is not to illustrate the Park, or its attendant attractions, its history, traditionary associations, etc., I shall not venture to attempt. I will leave my readers to others more versed in such matters; but, having served twenty years in the Police as Constable and Sergeant in Hyde Park, it has occurred to me that it may be somewhat interesting for me as a Police Officer to detail my experience of a few of the many things that have happened during that period. I have retired on pension from the Police, now just four years, and, until recently, it never occurred to me to write a reminiscence of my time there, and yet it often seemed to me “something” to be able to say that I had served twenty years in such a fashionable locality.

Retired Detective Officers often appear in print relating their adventures through the service, tracing, apprehending and bringing criminals to justice. I have read them, and found them very interesting, and generally accepted so, I think, by the public in general, so why should not a Uniform Officer be equally accepted? At any rate, I have made up my mind to try. If only in a brief form, it may afford an interesting hour, and possibly a little information may be gleaned therefrom by those

who do or may visit this charming "Royal" Park. And what I write I intend to stand by—what I mean to say is, I have either witnessed with my own eyes or can satisfactorily vouch for; I also further state I shall confine myself to that which is entertaining or interesting to the most modest woman or the most worldly man, as Hyde Park, like most other London public resorts, is infested by a certain class of character, to whom I intend to make little or no reference.

The Police Station where I served has given way to a more commodious and modern building of that name. (Rebuilt 1902.) I will, however, give a brief description of the old place as far as I am able to relate. Anyone walking by the footpath through Hyde Park from the Marble Arch to the Magazine, and when about halfway, would pass on their left-hand side a quaint one-storied old brick building, with its long verandah and grass lawn, surrounded with iron rails; this was the Police Station,* certainly nothing to indicate it, being so different to the uniform building we see in the streets with the familiar blue glass lamp over the door; not one out of every dozen that passed this place—non-Londoners especially—ever dreamt that it was a Police Station; but a Police Station it had been for the last forty years at least. Yes, and some of the worst of characters have been marched under its portals, and placed in the iron oblong dock, from the "gentleman-got-up" thief, with his dust-coat on his arm, who moves about Society on the side of Rotten Row, to the dirty cad pickpocket who attends large demonstrations and steals all he can, from a pocket-handkerchief upwards; the cowardly bully who lives on the nightly immoral earnings of his paramour, and who, when she cannot give him the required sum he demands, knocks her with his fist flat to the ground. These and many more of a similar type have been brought to book in that old place. Happily the Park is better lighted now, and such characters as the last two mentioned are few and far between.

I may add that I was selected by Inspector Pope,

* Originally used as a Military guard-room.

then in charge of the Police at Hyde Park Station, to accompany him round the Park and assist him in suggesting in his report to the First Commissioner of Works where the present tall electric standards should be placed. It is not from any desire to boast that I make this observation; but, considering I had then been traversing the Park on duty for the past seventeen years, I at least ought to know the haunts of these obnoxious individuals. It has had a threefold benefit. First, the extermination of such pests from the Park; secondly, the public can now pass through these particular parts with comfort and safety; and thirdly, it has certainly caused less work and anxiety to the police, for, if they were driven away one minute they would return almost the next, as, in the darkness, they could easily evade detection.

About thirty of us single men resided in the old station, and, antiquated as it may have appeared outside, it was clean and comfortable inside. On entering the doorway, right and left were the Inspector's (or Enquiry) Office, Charge-room and cells respectively; passing a little further on the right, is the mess kitchen or dining-room; continuing through brings you into the library, a nice spacious room, with its full-size billiard table and well-stocked book cupboards; through another door on the left brings you into the cooking kitchen; following on leads along a passage down a few steps into the yard below, where we find the stables for the horses of the Mounted Police. This was the station I made my acquaintance with in April, 1874.

To begin properly my career in the Police, I may as well state that I joined in the year 1871, then a young countryman with aspirations for the blue uniform in London. I started from my native place, Ludlow—that quaint, historic little town in Shropshire—and successfully passing the necessary requirements, was posted to the “A” or Whitehall Division, King Street Station. Having served there just on three years, I was appointed to special duty in Hyde Park in the month and year above mentioned. After duly reporting myself to the Inspector in Charge, Mr. James Butler, the then Senior

Inspector—there were two Inspectors, the second in command being Mr. Charles Fraser, afterwards many years the Police Superintendent of H.M. the late Queen Victoria, and who, I may add, resided in married quarters attached to the station—I was ordered for duty at six o'clock the next morning. And never shall I forget that morning. It is as vivid to me now, just on thirty years since, as if it were last week. I was posted to a beat in Kensington Gardens—the Police then had the control of Kensington Gardens, also the Green Park, which were supplied from Hyde Park Station, but was superseded by the present Park constables in 1886.

But to return to my beat in Kensington Gardens. I was shown round once by another constable. I commenced at the Albert Memorial, down the centre path leading to Lancaster Gate, crossed over to the left or south side of the Round Pond, straight along to Kensington Palace, to the extreme end of the Gardens, and returning up the Flower Walk to where I started. It was a most beautiful morning. Being an exceptionally warm Spring that year, the rhododendrons, may, laburnum and lilac were in full bloom. The wood pigeons cooed on the tops of the white-blossomed chestnut trees, and the thrushes and blackbirds sang gaily. After being on duty as I had at King Street Station, and posted on traffic crossings, cab rank standings, etc., month after month,—to tell the truth, I had had almost enough of it; for to stand on a busy traffic crossing eight hours in all kinds of weather, wet or dry, hot or cold, which we had to do in those days, without a single five minutes for a little refreshment, was, as the saying goes, “not all beer and skittles,” I can tell you—but, however, things are arranged better now; men don't have to stand so long at a stretch on a busy post—so it was like being in Paradise to me, and when my tour of duty ended, well, I could scarcely realise that the time had passed away. But Hyde Park is the groundwork of my narrative; still, I thought I would just mention the gardens, having frequently to do duty there, and possibly, before I close my tale, I may refer to that delightful place again.

I cannot recall anything of any particular importance that happened during the season of 1874, my first season, little thinking I was going to see twenty as a Police Officer. Of course, there were the annual meets of the Four-in-Hand and Coaching Clubs, with its concourse of sightseers, the Row full of riders, and the endless ranks of carriages, especially on the occasion of H.M. Queen Victoria driving through the Park. It was a grand and imposing sight to me at first, but it all became familiar, and I soon settled down to my new duty in the ordinary way. Time sped along, the Season was over, and we quickly had winter upon us.



II.—WINTER IN THE PARK.

IT was in December I first had my experience in "Ice Duty," that is, when the Serpentine is frozen over. So many Police Constables are posted along the banks to prevent persons going on to skate or slide until it is considered safe by some official appointed from "The Office of Works." Colonel Wheatley, in his capacity as Park Bailiff, was for many years entrusted with this responsible duty. Major Clive Hussey now holds the position. The Long Water, as a rule, was the first portion of the lake to be opened, as the water is much more shallow in that particular spot than the Serpentine, varying from three to five feet up to the west or Magazine Bridge, which divides the above from the Serpentine. I must explain—although one distinct lake—that portion in Kensington Gardens is known as the Long Water. Beyond the bridge and entering the Serpentine the water becomes gradually deeper, and in some parts attains a depth of fourteen feet; greater precautions are, of course, taken before this part is opened, that is to say, while the frost continues a hole in the ice is bored, and measured every morning, and must at least be four or five inches in thickness before skating is permitted upon it. I have known the ice—I believe it was in the "eighties," anyhow a most severe winter—of such a thickness that a gentleman drove a dogcart tandem across the deepest part of the lake—a freak, of course, possibly for a wager, for all I know. Taking advantage of the early morning, when things are tolerably quiet, he succeeded in driving safely from shore to shore; he did not, however, escape scot free, for endangering his own and other people's lives, for he was met on the other side by a police constable, the result

being a summons before the Magistrate for "driving on an unauthorised place," which cost him a little for his adventure.

In this particular month (December, my first winter) I witnessed a sad fatality that has never been erased from my mind. The ice at this time was about an inch or two in thickness. It is an astonishing fact that at the first appearance of frost, and when the ice will hardly more than bear a duck, scores of people will flock down to the sides, with their skates under their arms, and look most wistfully at the ice, and would really risk their very lives if it were not for the police preventing them. In the case I am about to relate the poor young fellow did more than risk it—for he lost it. He was a young Belgian—of good position, so I was informed—at the well-known firm of Swan and Edgar, Drapers, etc., Regent Street, who had come over here to acquire a knowledge of the business. He, with two young ladies, about eight p.m., like many others, walked down to the Serpentine in hopes of "having them on" for half-an-hour, but, to his dismay, notice boards and police were there prohibiting anyone doing so; I suppose the temptation was too strong, for, watching his opportunity, he, I was told, slipped on his skates in a jiffy and soon glided about fifty yards from the shore (this was at the east end of the lake, near to the little or east end bridge), but he had not gone more than that distance before there was a crash, and in he went into about eight or ten feet of water. Shouts and screams for help attracted my attention. I was on duty near "William's" boat-house, and ran round to the bridge. I could just see the poor fellow in the darkness clinging to an expanding ice-ladder which had been pushed out to him. Several plucky attempts had been made to rescue him, but each one on going on the ice about half-a-dozen yards went through, and had to scramble back the best way they could. Poor old John Winnett, the ferry boatman on the Serpentine for many years, arrived on the scene with his cork jacket, and he, like the others, had not gone far before the ice gave way; but his jacket kept

him up, and he battled and broke away at the ice with one of the long drag poles like a good-one. With strained eyes we watched him as he crashed his way nearer and nearer toward the drowning man, and, I should say, got within half-a-dozen yards, when we heard an awful gasp for breath from the head we could just dimly see clinging to the ladder, and all at once it disappeared beneath the ice. It was all over, he had held on till exhaustion and cold caused him to succumb. It was distressing to hear the piteous cries of the poor young ladies who had accompanied him. A sledge* boat had by this time been brought up by land; we very soon launched it, and broke away the ice until the spot was reached. With pole-hooks we soon dragged the body up, and got it ashore, and without the least delay bore it to the Royal Humane Society's Receiving House, situate on the north side of the Serpentine, where all possible means were applied to restore animation pending the arrival of a doctor, who soon stated it was of no avail. A sad and sudden end, I thought to a fine young fellow! When stripped, I never saw a man of more splendid physique.

Although a body may have been under water for some considerable time, life is not despaired of at this Institution (The R.H. Society's Receiving House). The "Silvester" method of "artificial respiration to the apparently drowned" is energetically applied until the arrival of a doctor who decides as to whether or not death has placed their efforts beyond all doubt. A small pamphlet, written by Dr. Silvester, on the treatment of the above, and obtainable from the R.H. Society, contains invaluable information for in many cases a steady and persevering application has been rewarded with gratifying results.

When the Serpentine or a portion of it is reported to be safe, all is plain sailing, and it is a fine sight to see the thousands of ladies and gentlemen, soldiers, boys and girls, all intermixed, enjoying their skating and sliding.

* Specially built for and supplied by the R.H.S. in case of immersion. Sledge-like runners are affixed underneath the bottom of these boats, enabling them to be easily pushed over the ice or frosty ground to wherever they may be required.

The evenings on such occasions are novel sights, for probably there are then more people on the ice than in the daytime. The shops and other business places being closed, it becomes practically crowded. To stand on the Magazine Bridge and witness the moving mass of lights, made up of torches, Chinese and other lanterns, etc., carried by the skaters, presents a most fantastical scene. One thing I cannot understand ; it seems to me to have such a fascination that some people don't care what money or property they risk in order to indulge in this recreation. On the announcement that the ice is safe, so many tickets or permits are issued for the hiring of skates at the Superintendent's (of the Park) Office, adjoining the Police Station—Superintendent Browne in my time—Mr. J. Gardner now holds the appointment—these are given to any apparently honest applicant. There is usually a big rush for them, and, unfortunately for the hirers, they are not all honest. These men stand on the side of the ice with their chairs, the tickets pinned conspicuously in front of their hats, with half-a-dozen or so pair of skates, and shout "On or off, ladies and gents, skates to hire! Who'll have a pair on?" and other such inviting exclamations to attract attention. They charge, I believe, about one shilling an hour, and always require a deposit on the skates. I have known plenty of cases where people have left five or six shillings on a pair of skates not worth eighteenpence; they take the number of the man's card, but, on their return the man, number, card, and all, have disappeared. One particular case I remember. A commercial traveller passing through the park thought he would like to "have a pair on." He left his box (or bag) of samples in charge of one of these men also a deposit on the skates, and all was missing on his return. He came to the station and reported his loss. He said they would be of little or no value to the thief, as they were only miniature samples of cutlery. But it meant a loss of £20 to him.

Having given us all the information he could, the gentleman was assured that we should do all that lay in our power to trace the man that had charge of his property. Still, it was a great chance, as the police

had nothing whatever to do with the issuing of the tickets to these men, consequently we could not be responsible for the correctness of names and addresses given by them. As it was getting dusk, the Inspector, at the gentleman's request, sent me to show him the way to Paddington Station. I accompanied him across the Park, and put him in the direct street for that terminus. He thanked me, and kindly gave me a shilling for my little assistance, but he appeared very crestfallen, and I could not help feeling sorry to see him go off empty-handed without even his umbrella (which he had also left with his case of samples). However, I believe that a better system and more precautions are now taken to protect the public in such matters.

Sometimes a rapid thaw would set in, consequently it became necessary to clear the ice (or serious results would surely follow)—not an easy task, for all the warning persuasion and shouting "All off!" was of no avail to some of those enthusiastic skaters who would persist in dodging and evading us. It was very amusing, I have no doubt, for those on the bank to stand and witness us slipping about after these bravadoes; but it was not so with us. One of our men, I remember, received a severe cut at the back of his head from a fall. So we had to resort to the rope, that is to say, one of the long ropes that lie on the bank in readiness for rescue purposes in cases of immersion, was brought into requisition. Some dozen of us with this extended right across the ice and in skirmishing order, proceeded down the whole length of the lake, and eventually succeeded in making a clearance. I scarcely need state that those who were daring enough (and some did) to evade this obstacle were lucky if they escaped without getting tripped up on their back. This comical method of clearing the ice by the police was humorously depicted in "Punch," January, 1887.

Although having served twenty years in Hyde Park, I am not going to attempt to enumerate year after year in succession what happened to the end of that period. In fact I could not do so. I kept no diary while in the Service, and, as I have already stated, never dreamt of

writing a history of it. Had I done so it would have been comparatively easy, for I could have furnished myself with names, dates, etc., of events at the time; but, as it is, I have had to tax my memory—I am thankful to say I have a tolerably good one—and hunt up old comrades and acquaintances to verify anything I have a doubt about. So I shall refer to different cases and occurrences that the police have to deal with in as interesting a form as I can, but I cannot confine myself consecutively.



III.—ACCIDENTS ON THE ROW, Etc.

ACCIDENTS from collisions with carriages, and from ridden horses bolting or stumbling, are frequent in the Season. The policeman has to be most cautious in the case of a collision between two vehicles; he must be cool and collected, for there is a lot to be done and thought of. Should there be any personal injury, it must be attended to first. Medical aid must be procured, either by sending for a doctor or conveying the injured to hospital. The latter is the usual practice. The names and addresses of the owner and driver of each vehicle, and of the injured persons, the damage done, whatever it may be; the names of witnesses (if any), position of vehicles, etc.—all must be dotted down in the pocket or report book, and a nice job it is. Usually when a collision happens a crowd gets round in a very short time, and you are sure to have half-a-dozen inquisitive necks stretched over your shoulder or arm watching you write down your particulars. I have had to elbow my way out of a circle of these intruders many a time. Personal injury is not so frequently caused from carriage accidents as from horses ridden, horses bolting with the lady or gentleman riding on the Row, or stumbling when going over the stone crossings, are daily occurrences; and I have seen some terrible injuries sustained both by rider and the unfortunate pedestrian who happens to get in the way. The Mounted Police in the Row have done some very good service in such cases. One in particular, Constable Dodd, had a clever method of galloping alongside the runaway horse, and gradually pulling it up by the reins. I know he had been rewarded

and commended by the Commissioner for his pluck a dozen times, to say nothing of the many gratuities he had presented him by various ladies and gentlemen for services rendered.

The late Attorney-General, Sir Robert Finlay, when Q.C., had a nasty fall from his horse one morning in the Row. How it occurred I cannot quite call to mind—whether the horse bolted or whether it stumbled—but he had struck his head in the fall, and was rendered unconscious. I happened to be on duty at Hyde Park Corner as he was being brought along on the ambulance by Mr. Hall, the Apsley Gate-keeper. I assisted in getting him into St. George's Hospital, where he was placed on a couch, and soon attended by a doctor. On recovering consciousness he asked what had been the matter. He was informed by a gentleman friend who accompanied him what had occurred, and he replied, "Was I riding ——?" (the horse's name). He was answered in the affirmative. I remember the late Sir James Hannen, who frequently walked down the side of Rotten Row on his way to the Law Courts, happened to be passing at the time, and, hearing that it was the eminent Q.C. that had met with the accident, he very considerably walked over to St. George's Hospital, and sent in his card to Sir Robert, and expressed his regret at what had happened to him. I am glad to say, after a short time, Sir Robert was able to leave the hospital and proceed home, not much the worse.

One of the most extraordinary of these accidents that I know of happened during the evening ride on the Row. Years ago the evening ride between five and seven was then as fashionable as the morning is at present. In fact, I have seen it so crowded with riders that a runaway would be impossible, even if one were ever so inclined. Those were the times when that elegant-looking horse-woman regularly attended the evening ride—familiarily known on the Row by the name of "Polly Skittles." Almost first to arrive and last to leave, her fine figure, and beautiful thoroughbred chestnut, with its proud arched neck and high step,

were undoubtedly objects of considerable attraction. But latterly the carriage drive only is indulged in during the evening. However, on the occasion I was about to refer to, a lady's horse bolted up the Row, and galloped in the direction of Kensington Gardens, no one having succeeded in checking its career, it dashed across the roadway at the top of the "Lady's Mile,"* and made an attempt to jump the iron rails that divide Hyde Park from Kensington Gardens; these rails, which are about six feet high and pointed at the top—luckily perhaps for the lady—the horse was unable to clear, and was spiked through the shoulders, where it hung—the lady pitched head first into the Gardens, and was not much the worse for the fall. The horse was eventually removed and destroyed.

The most awful fatal accident that came under my observation, caused by being thrown from a horse, was in the case of Major Macdonald, of the —— Highlanders. One morning as he was cantering off the Ride on the Bayswater side of the Park, mounted on a beautiful white Arab, he was returning home after his morning's ride, going over the stone crossing on the roadway near the Marble Arch Gate, his horse stumbled and slipped forward, pitching the Major clean out of the saddle on to his head, inflicting a terrible wound. Death, I should say, must have been instantaneous, but he was conveyed with all possible speed on the ambulance (one happened to be stationed near the Marble Arch) to St. George's Hospital, and the House Surgeon was soon in attendance, but he stated him to be dead. Then came the question—Who was the gentleman?—for a gentleman he certainly was from his appearance, and evidently of good birth. No one knew at the time of the accident, and no one accompanied us to the hospital; but the most astonishing part of it was not a card, pocket-book, letter or scrap of anything could the


* Tradition gives the "Lady's Mile" originally to be situate on the present "Ring Road," on the north side, and parallel with the Serpentine; but for many years now the Straight Mile on the "Row" has been recognised by the above fashionable name.

constable or I find on his person. Search as we did blood-saturated as some of them were, every single garment, pockets, lining, under-linen, over and over again—there was not even an article of jewellery with name or initials to assist us in his identity—in short, nothing but the clothing he wore. I noticed the name of the maker on the tab or loop of his jacket. This certainly was something (as I once traced the identity of a man found dead in Hyde Park by the maker's name on the buttons of a new suit of clothing he had on), so I at once directed the constable to go to that establishment (in Old Bond Street or Piccadilly I believe it was), with a description of the suit—a grey tweed—and ascertain, if he could, any information. I myself hastened to our station, with a full description of the body and clothing, which was speedily telegraphed round to all the police stations, so that on his being missed, enquiries by his friends at any police station in London would be referred to Hyde Park for particulars. Yet things must not rest at that; every means must be resorted to in order to get the body identified and friends informed as soon as possible—that is the first and bounden duty of the police in a fatal case. The Arab horse had been brought to the station and secured in the stable yard, apparently none the worse for the fall. Then it occurred to me, and the Inspector on duty, that possibly some information from one of the proprietors of the many livery stables, horse repositories, etc., in the vicinity of the Marble Arch, might be obtained concerning the Arab. On this errand I at once started. I am sure I had a good two hours' tramping from one yard to another without success, and was almost giving it up and going back to the station to see if any news had arrived, when I looked in at "Hetherington's," Edgware Road, and after again relating the occurrence, Mr. Hetherington gravely shook his head and said he was sorry he could not assist me in the matter; but a gentleman who happened to be in the office, and had heard what had passed, said to me as I was about to leave: "I believe I have seen a white Arab come out of a mews near Portman Square." I quickly proceeded

to that neighbourhood, which of course is only a few minutes' walk, and after a few enquiries I found the stables where an Arab was kept, and, I am glad to say, the one in question, for I was soon informed the name and address of the deceased gentleman by the groom, who also said he had been anxiously waiting hours for the return of the horse and his master.



IV.—BATHING IN THE SERPENTINE.

 OF course most people who come to the Park of an evening are aware of the swarm of small boys who assemble on the bathing ground (or space), some four hundred yards allotted for that purpose on the south shore, who have been waiting hours before the time, especially after a hot day in July; (they come in droves and batches from all quarters of London) anxiously looking for the signal to plunge in—and this signal was the approach of the Royal Humane Society boats from the opposite side of the water, exactly at half-past seven, to be in readiness to render assistance to any of the bathers that may be in danger of drowning—three as a rule, one at each end of the boundary and one in the centre.

I assure you it is no easy job for the police a few minutes before the approach of these boats to keep them from undressing and plunging in, the eagerness of the young rascals being so great. When I say “undressing” I mean stripping off what little they have on—the word is superfluous, for to keep them from undressing long before the time was a matter of impossibility; it appeared a certain amount of gratification to them to undress, and it was only with firmness and intimidation of sending them away altogether that they could be prevailed upon to squat about with even their shirts on. We usually supplied ourselves with a light stick or cane, and shook it at them in a threatening manner, occasionally impressing upon them the fact that they would get a taste of it, if they did not behave themselves, or we should have been overrun; and even when the boats did appear, and the shout went up—“All in!” I have been in a state of suspense while the boats were coming across, as in sheer excitement the smaller ones were so apt to get out of their depth. But it is surprising—owing, I believe, to the promptness and

watchfulness of the R.H.S.'s boatmen under Mr. Supt. Horton—that very few casualties happen; and when you come to consider, three men have to keep at this particular rush (I don't think I shall be exaggerating) between six and seven hundred bathers, young and old, under their observation, I think you will admit all credit is due to this Society. A scene of excitement now takes place, the splashing, laughing and yelling one to another in their intense delight for the first few minutes are perfectly deafening, and is heard almost all over the Park; many, I am sure, hear this din and wonder where it proceeds from.

After the bathe and the excitement are over, then comes the dressing business, and often trouble with it, for I have frequently known a youngster's neighbour take a fancy for his superior pair of boots, leaving his inferior pair instead, and often not even that consideration shown, to say nothing of the squabbles one with another brought about by the intermixing of each other's clothing.

So much for evening bathing. Just a little about the morning—that takes place from five to eight o'clock, all the year round. This may be doubted, so far as the attendance is concerned, but it is actually true, for, frost or no frost, there are an exceptional few elderly bathers who come regularly and have their morning dip; even should the ice be ever so thick, they manage to keep a sufficient space so as to have a plunge at this one particular spot. I have often seen them with a drag pole breaking the ice which had frozen since the morning before.

There is also the Christmas morning swimming race by members of the Serpentine Swimming Club, of course weather permitting; what I mean to say is, let the weather be ever so rough and cold, if the frost has not been too severe and the course is clear of ice, the race comes off—about a hundred yards, I believe, and quite far enough too, for the competitors are very glad to get out and dress; they have plenty of attendance from their friends, who supply them with liberal drinks of hot rum and milk to drive the cold out. If any of my

readers have any doubt as to the authenticity of this race taking place (it certainly sounds incredible), I would refer them to the *Sporting Life* newspaper or the Secretary of the S.S.C., Mr. Rowly, and they will soon be assured on the matter. The summer morning bathing is much more pleasant to stand about and witness. I have seen some fine short distance handicap races given there by the above club during bathing hours. Some of my readers may remember Dave Ainsworth, the champion short distance swimmer, an old member of the S.S.C. Of course he was always scratch man in a race. I have seen the limit man in a hundred yards race apparently within twenty yards of the winning flag before the starter, with watch in hand, has given Dave the word "Go." He has gone off the diving plank like an arrow, and ploughed through the water after the style of a little steam launch—pass a dozen, and nearly, if not quite, win. I have witnessed these races many times with great interest.

A race introduced since my time, but most certainly worthy of mention for its humane idea, is the Lord Howard de Walden's "Clothes Race" (everything on—no undressing); it is generously encouraged with prizes given by that nobleman and also by Mr. Burdett Coutts. Other gentlemen also present prizes to be competed for in the ordinary races. Last, but not least, is a handsome cup presented annually by the proprietors of *The Daily Telegraph* newspaper, known as the "Daily Telegraph Cup."

I may add the police are always on duty there during bathing hours, to see that the rules of the Park are not infringed.



V.—SUNDAY IN HYDE PARK.

ALTHOUGH (to speak my mind frankly) I never cared for Sunday duty, yet I must say I have passed away some pleasant hours, as it was entirely different and a change from the week-day routine. Sunday in Hyde Park has a very different aspect to the week-day. People using Hyde Park on a week-day and not on a Sunday, and people using it on a Sunday and not on a week-day, take little or no notice; but people using it both days must observe a great contrast, especially in the summer. The carriage drive, with its long rank of traffic consisting of broughams, curricles, landaus, etc., some standing, some moving. On Sunday, with the exception of a bicycle or motor* passing through, scarcely a vehicle is to be seen. Rotten Row, with its numerous riders galloping to and fro—to-day not a single one. The Serpentine, dotted all over with its pleasure boats—not one to be seen until the afternoon, with the exception of a few model yachts (if there is any breeze) being sailed across by some elderly men who take an interest in this simple amusement on Sunday mornings. All is peace and tranquility.

On the banks of the Serpentine—here certainly the peacefulness is somewhat disturbed by the barking of dogs in their delight at jumping into the water after sticks thrown in by their owners; but this chiefly happens in the morning only, and of course is only a minor matter. The sides of the Row, the Flower Walk, and the different paths, say from about eleven to one o'clock, are thronged with people of all classes, but quiet and orderly. Then there is what is called the "Church Parade," which extends from Rotten Row as far as

* I may here remark, electric and motor cars in the Park when I left were not nearly so common as at the present time, and I must pass on without a single incident concerning that now fashionable equipage.

Grosvenor Gate. This so-called church parade is composed principally of the nobility who reside in the neighbourhood of the Park and like a short constitutional walk before returning home after attending the morning service. On a fine day this in itself is a sight worth witnessing—the varied tints and colours of the ladies' dresses and sunshades produce a brilliant scene, exceptionally so on what is termed "Ascot Sunday," being the Sunday following the races. The path from the Achilles Statue to Stanhope Gate I have frequently seen so crowded that one could only move at a snail's pace. Also the "Flower Walk," between Stanhope and Grosvenor Gates is a favourite stroll.

I will now pass over till about six o'clock, and introduce my readers to the so-called "Vanity Fair," and that is a triangular-shaped lawn, situate between the Achilles Statue and Stanhope Gate, fronting the carriage drive, and immediately opposite Hamilton Gardens. A path some five hundred yards long, which bears the name of the "Lover's Walk," runs at the rear, with its beautiful avenue of trees giving it a pleasant-looking background. Why this particular spot is called "Vanity Fair" I could not explain. I can only say this, that undoubtedly the very *élite* and cream of London Society, will be found there at this time during the Season, having a chat and *tête-à-tête* prior to going home to dine. Not an inch of ground or a single chair but what is occupied, and I believe there are some thousands.

By seven o'clock most have left, and there is nothing to remain for. Sometimes an umbrella, parasol, or fan, or other article may be left on a chair, which is taken charge of by the police, the loser being able to regain it if applied for at the station.

I shall now proceed towards the Marble Arch, where religious and other small gatherings are held on the grass near that gate about this time. The Church Army usually occupy the corner of the Broad Path, and in close proximity others of different sects, etc.; you can hear the Atheist holding discussions with the Christian (a time limit being mutually arranged for each speaker),

in fact, orators—or rather would-be orators—of all classes venting their preconceived notions, grievances, etc., which ever the case may be. Sometimes they get very warm in their debates, consequently it is necessary for the police to be near in case of disorder. A little farther down on the grass, and almost opposite Brook Street Gate, Mr. Charles Cooke holds his Sunday Evening Prayer Meetings—the earnest evangelist—who, for the past thirty years every summer conducts his Sunday evening services on this particular spot. A more orderly and better conducted gathering one could not desire; the singing of his choir I used to stand and listen to with pleasure, although perhaps our presence was really not necessary; still one never knows in Hyde Park when some rowdy person or other is likely to come along and cause a disturbance, and I think Mr. Cooke was always pleased to see the man in blue standing on the outskirts of his meeting.

The shades of night are gathering around, most of the meetings have sung their last hymn and dispersed, a few certainly are standing in groups and holding little arguments, but all is quiet; and I hear the strains of the band playing “God Save the Queen,” which means it is just on ten o’clock, and so ends my tour of duty, and I make my way to our station. One of the Guards Bands, as most people are aware, now plays in the band-stand (situate near Hyde Park Corner) on Sunday evenings from 7 till 9 p.m.; but during my service a band under the direction of Mr. V. L. Shotton played from 7 till 10 p.m., as on a week-day during the present summer months.



VI.—MEET OF THE FOUR-IN-HAND AND COACHING CLUBS.

THE Meets of the above in Hyde Park are red letter days to the police, and I believe the general public are equally interested, judging from the attendance to witness these fashionable "turn-outs." They are undoubtedly one of the greatest attractions of the London Season. I am not going to attempt to describe the origin or merits of these particular clubs any more than saying that none but the highest noblemen of the land are members of either; my humble efforts are simply confined to police duty on these occasions. As I said before, we looked forward to these events with anxiousness, as we prided ourselves on having carried out this duty on our own—no assistance from outside divisions, and, judging from the congratulatory letters received by the Commissioner from the Secretary of the Clubs, I believe everything was done satisfactorily. Every man available, of course, was required, for I must say in all my experience there was only one occasion that a greater number of people would come to the Park, and that was on the occasion of Her Majesty the late Queen Victoria driving through the Park in the Season on her return journey from Buckingham Palace to Windsor, usually about 5 p.m.; in the ordinary way the Park is pretty full at that time, but the desire to see Her Majesty and that combined, I must give that occasion precedence. Of course, I am speaking of annual events, not of those that would crop up promiscuously, such as large political demonstrations, etc.

But to return to the principal topic of this chapter. There were usually two Meets each of these clubs during the season, as a rule one each before Ascot and one each before Goodwood Race Meetings.* One o'clock was the

* One out of the four of these Meets usually takes place in St. James's Park, on the Horse Guards' Parade, at six o'clock in the evening—invariably the last of the Season.

hour for the Meet to start, and about half an hour before that time they commenced to assemble on a fine piece of carriage roadway, some hundred and fifty yards long and between twenty and thirty wide, in close proximity to the Magazine. We always paraded about twelve o'clock under the trees in front of this spot, and each man told off to his respective post by the inspector in charge. And very soon work commences, for carriages, broughams, landaus, etc., begin to come from all directions to take up their positions; these the police have to rank in as even and close as possible, each side of the road, and take particular notice that only the authorised ranks take up a position, double rank one side and single the other; but, of course, this all depends upon the width of the road and at the discretion of the inspector in charge, where he considered necessary that every facility be given for the coaches to pass. The route usually taken is, starting at the Magazine, along Ring Road to Hyde Park Corner, turning to right up Carriage Road via Albert, Prince of Wales, and Alexandra Gates, leaving the Park by Queen's Gate. As the coaches approach the starting or meeting place they are met and escorted by a mounted constable, and placed in their respective positions by the orders of the Secretary, Mr. F. R. Lovegrove, who is on the ground ready waiting for them. I must refer my readers to the members of the Press for a description of these beautiful, high-mettled, prancing "teams"—it is not in my power to give them half the praise they deserve, and I am not going to attempt it; but I certainly read the reports in the newspapers with pleasure, and not only of the horses, but the owner on the box, with reins and whip in hand, and the other occupants are all given in the most minute details by these gentlemen.

No vehicle of any kind is allowed on the space allotted to the "Meet" with one exception—Her Majesty Queen Alexandra (when Princess of Wales), driving in her phaeton and pair. Her Royal Highness was one of the earliest to arrive on the ground, and appeared to take great interest in the teams as they arrived. Equestrians were permitted to rank close to

the iron rails on the side of the roadway, and, of course, plenty of pedestrians would get in front of them, and as close to the coaches as the police would allow. My post for several years, in fact up to the time I retired, was on the Serpentine Bridge—myself and two constables, one at each side. My orders were that no vehicle of any kind was to remain on or near the approaches to the bridge; and a harassing time it was, for what with the turning back of the excess traffic when the ranks *en route* were full, and loitering and grumbling cabmen who persisted they had been instructed to wait for their fares, it was no easy matter to carry out, and I was most thankful when the signal was given the coaches had started. My orders also were that on the last coach leaving the Magazine I should at once proceed with my two men to Queen's Gate, and prevent any obstruction to the teams leaving the Park on their way to Hurlingham or Ranelagh, and as there were no police to be spared prior to this, we had to lose no time in getting there. I usually cut across the corner of Kensington Gardens, and have run nearly the whole way; and we were not the only ones that hurried up, for when the last coach had left, a rush, almost amounting to a stampede, occurs, for equestrians, pedestrians and vehicles made a pell-mell rush over the bridge for the Alexandra and Queen's Gates, to see them pass by. This in itself is an amusing spectacle to witness; everyone seems in a good humour, and takes a delight in this sharp rush for a few minutes, after standing about for so long. I have never known of any accident in consequence, for, as I have said, the bridge and road were comparatively free of traffic, so they had a clear course for their run.

The whole of the coaches do not proceed to Hurlingham; a few of the members, upon arriving at Queen's Gate, will turn round and drive through the Park again until time to go home for luncheon. There were usually about twenty members—sometimes more, sometimes less—attend their respective club meets.

VII.—VAGRANTS.

“ Homeless, ragged and tanned,
Under the changeful sky,
Who so free in the land?
Who so contented as I? ”

(Old Song) “ The Vagabond.”

VAGABONDS, tramps, casuals of all classes, have free access to the Park. On a hot summer's day, passing from the Marble Arch Gate down by the side of the North Ride, they may be seen stretched out on the grass basking in the sun like alligators. At least they were pretty well allowed to do so during my service, for the simple reason that there was no rule that one could with confidence act upon to prevent them. But, thank goodness, a more stringent and peremptory rule has been recently introduced, which I hope will in time be the means of exterminating these objectionable-looking characters from the Park altogether. This duty had to be done very cautiously. To nine people out of every ten who came into the Park it was a most unpleasant sight to see these dirty, ragged, greasy-looking fellows lying, some on the broad of their backs, with mouths open, snoring away to their heart's content. Often we used to try and get rid of them by rousing them up and ordering them outside, and, if possible, could prove they were breaking the then existing rule, they were occasionally taken to the station and charged. But one never knew when some interfering person or other would come to the policeman and demand to know the reason he was disturbed—“What harm has he done? It is a free Park,” and so on; possibly not any harm, yet it is our duty to ascertain if those apparently asleep are dead or alive. (It was not unusual to find one dead—I have done so.) And these busybodies, not content with the explanation given, will even then write and complain of the constable's “unnecessary interference.” I have had practical experience with such people.

The enforcement of the rule introduced some year or two ago, forbidding reciting, comic sketches in character, palmistry, etc., by some tag, rag and bobtail lot who found it a paying game in the Park, these disgraceful exhibitions soon disappeared—for why? Because it was comparatively easy for the policeman to stop their “business,” or if they persisted they very soon made acquaintance with the Magistrate. Just opposite the Marble Arch Gate was a hunting ground for this class of people, and I should think a little gold mine for the palmists, judging from the number of simpletons—I can call them nothing else—male and female, who appeared so eager to pay their sixpence to have their hand felt and a few suave words whispered in their ear.

I have seen two or three at a time doing quite a brisk trade, but, of course, the rule prohibiting “unauthorised persons from soliciting or collecting money” soon enabled the police to put a stop to all that. But in the case of vagrants it is not such plain sailing; for my readers must not jump to the conclusion that all the people they see asleep on the grass are tramps and loafers. Take, for instance, a rough-looking but honest working-man, who has left his home at Hammersmith at four o'clock in the morning, and walked up to and about the West End for hours, like hundreds do, and even then fails to get a job. He has to return home tired, footsore and down-hearted, and crossing the Park the temptation to resist a “downer” is too strong. The result is he falls asleep.

I have come across these poor fellows many a time, and usually on being awakened they will be up and off without a word; but not so with the vagrant. He is annoyed at being disturbed, and will ask, “What’s up?”

I could keep on writing of one incident and another concerning this duty, but what I have said I hope will convey to my readers the caution the police have to exercise in weeding out the habitual loafers; as I have had no experience under the new rule, it is not for me to comment as to the result it may or may not have, but I may be permitted to say that I believe, with a little patience this, like other past grievances, will cease

to exist. For, after all, people must not forget—dirty and unsightly as the vagrant may appear—he is mortal like the rest of us, and cannot be swept away all at once like so much refuse. One never knows under what circumstances some of them have drifted into this deplorable state. I have no desire to be sentimental—that must not stand in the way of duty—still, it can be tempered with a little common humanity. There was one man at all events who sympathised with these poor wretches—Charles Lamb Kenney—judging from the pathetic words of his song, with the first verse of which I headed this chapter, and with the last I will close.

“ Once, tender love watched by my side,
Now, from above, her angel's my guide,
When heaven above asks my last breath,
Angel love smile on the vagabond's death.”



VIII.—SUICIDES.

SUICIDES in Hyde Park, unfortunately, were of a very frequent occurrence. Drowning in the Serpentine was usually the method adopted. The revolver and poison are often resorted to, and even hanging in the trees. I knew of one case where the body of a man was discovered in broad daylight suspended by a piece of cord from the bough of a tree situated between the Marble Arch Gate and Police Station. One of the most determined suicides was a man who stood on the parapet of the West or Magazine Bridge, shot himself with a revolver through the head, and fell backwards into the water. Another came under my own personal observation. I was on duty one morning near Stanhope Gate, and was informed that on a seat a little distance away a man was bleeding from the throat. On my arrival at the spot indicated I could see nothing of the man, but was attracted by a trail of blood on a path leading to the Serpentine. This I followed in that direction, thinking he had made for the water, but being unable to obtain any further trace of him, I went to the R.H.S. Receiving House for the purpose of informing the officials, who would at once search the vicinity in a boat. Upon my arriving there it appeared information had already been given, for the dead body of a man had just been taken out of the water, and undoubtedly the one I was in pursuit of, for there was a frightful gash in the throat.

In this brief reference to these regrettable affairs, I must relate one more, for whenever I have a walk in the Park, and should I cross the Magazine Bridge, the occurrence I am about to relate usually comes to my mind.

I was on evening duty (5 p.m. to 1 a.m.), and on my way to make my last visit to the constables on duty at the Albert Memorial, and was crossing the bridge as Big Ben was striking twelve, when I heard a sound not unlike the discharge of firearms come from the direction

of the south bank of the Serpentine. It was not a sharp bang, but a thuddy, suppressed kind of report. I stopped short and listened . . . but could hear nothing more, only the last strokes of the clock booming in the distance, and all was still! Then came the question—"What was it?" and the cause. It certainly sounded like a revolver or something of the kind—possibly some poor wretch putting a tragic end to his existence, or perhaps only some half-drunken characters passing through the Park "having a lark," as they call it, for there are all sorts of strange noises in the evening made by people on their way home; but I must confess this struck me as something out of the ordinary. However, I tried to persuade myself it was of no consequence, for, having been on my legs for nearly eight hours, I was not very anxious to go out of my way and look for a case of suicide, especially on the off chance of one not having been committed.

At any rate, whatever it may have been, I would have the night duty constable informed, so that he would give an extra look over that particular part of his beat. Having thus decided, I accordingly proceeded on my way through Kensington Gardens to the Albert Memorial, made my visit, and retraced my steps with the intention of going to our station (to get to which I should have to re-cross the bridge again), for with some reports, etc., that I should have to enter, the whole of my time would be busily engaged up to the end of my tour of duty.

But when I arrived at the bridge—cross I could not—an irresistible feeling came over me that I must go to the place from whence the noise proceeded, it being that side of the water I was then on. I said to myself, "Well, this is all right!" for there was not a soul about, no "bulls-eye" with me, and almost pitch dark. However, across the grass I went, in the direction I believed the sound came from, and had walked about two or three hundred yards, and passing through a clump of old elm trees, I could just discern in the darkness an object on the ground. I approached it; it was a man—there was no doubt at all now—the usual position, flat on the back, arms and legs extended, revolver

clutched in hand. Bending over him, I could perceive a fearful wound in his forehead, and his whole frame was quivering like an aspen leaf—evidently the bullet had not yet quite completed its fatal work.

I could now also quite realize the cause of my uncertainty while standing on the bridge, wondering what the sound may or may not have been. That it was a revolver shot was now only too evident; but I believe there is no doubt but what the suicide, with a view to ensure his certain death, pressed the muzzle of the weapon as close as possible to his head at the time he discharged it, and, as an additional consequence, would have the effect of producing the stifled report I heard that caused my perplexity.

However, I will not go into further details concerning this ghastly case, any more than to say, although I was hours later in getting to bed that night, I felt considerably more at rest that I had "cleared up" the affair myself. When I commenced this chapter I intended to say as little as possible about these sad occurrences—they are not pleasant subjects to read about, and under the most favourable circumstances a very unpleasant duty to perform. Still, it had to be done, and likely to be, I am afraid; but I could not refrain from entering at length into this one, for in all the many cases I have been engaged in, I cannot recall one that made a greater impression on me—the sudden prompting to go and look, and walking direct to the body, was a coincidence I cannot easily forget.

Lastly, it may afford a certain amount of relief for me to state, regrettably frequent as these cases of self-destruction—or self-murder—are, yet, during the whole of my service, or since that I am aware of, not a single case of the terrible crime of deliberate murder, or even attempted murder, by a person or persons, upon the life of another, has ever had to be recorded by the police; and when one comes to consider Hyde Park, open as it is from early morn till midnight, day after day, from one year's end to the other, to its myriads of humanity in all sorts and conditions of life,—is at least, I should hope, some consolation.

IX.—THE OLD REFORM TREE.

THE old Reform, or "Reformer's" Tree, as some people term it, at least the spot where it once stood, is well known to most people who frequent Hyde Park—the headquarters of political and other demonstrations; but for the information of those who do not happen to know this renowned place, I will endeavour to describe it, and also the extirpation of the old tree. Suppose we enter the Park at the Grosvenor Gate, Park Lane, and take a direct line along the foot-path leading to the Albert Memorial and Alexandra Gate (indicated by a finger post); after proceeding for some three hundred yards you arrive at a square-like grove of old elm trees—it is known as "Russell Square." This place bears the reputation of once being a favourite resort for betting; the centre is, however, now occupied by a water reservoir, being a reserve supply for the Royal Palaces; also a Refreshment Chalet and other accommodation have recently been introduced in the "square." On the left or north-east corner, and within a dozen yards of the present electric standard, the "original" stood; I believe an elm like its neighbours, but not a vestige of green or anything to indicate that species—simply a stark, blasted-looking old trunk, dead as a doornail, whether from lightning or old age, it had fallen into such a state, I am unable to say, but that is how it appeared in the year 1875, and was recognised as "The Old Reform Tree." The occasion of its demolition, or the cause of it, happened at a meeting or demonstration in the summer of the year mentioned above. It was not a political meeting, but a trade grievance, and I remember very largely attended. So far as the meeting was concerned it had gone off orderly and quiet, resolutions had been passed, and people were really dispersing homewards. I may add it was on a week-day, and took place in the evening, I presume to give employees every facility to attend; however, it was getting dusk, when suddenly smoke and

sparks were seen issuing from the old tree, and it became apparent it had been set on fire, and that we conjectured, by mischievous boys; burn and smoke it did alarmingly, for it was nothing more than a lump of tinder, and this must have occurred to the boys—that it would burn well if ignited, and cause them fun. We could do nothing without water to put the fire out, as it was burning from the top part; evidently one had climbed up and lit it. We cleared the crowd back some twenty yards from the smouldering tree until the arrival of a small manual fire engine, brought by a couple of firemen; but during the wait for this assistance the boys and others indulged in a fine game, for sticks, stones or any other missiles that could be found were flung at the old tree, and if struck, as it was dusk, up would go a shower of sparks like a rocket, to the shouts and amusement of those concerned. I was glad when the little engine just mentioned arrived and soon put an end to any sign of fire, and the crowd finally dispersed. To prevent a repetition of a similar scene, the Park authorities soon decided to have it removed altogether. Still there is the space where the old tree stood, if any of my readers care to take a walk and see as I have described.



X.—NIGHT DUTY IN HYDE PARK.

I HAVE no doubt many people will be surprised to know that the police patrol round their beats in the Park all night long, just as they do in the streets; of course not so many as in the day, only half the number. You will possibly say, "Whatever for?" I will endeavour to inform you. The winter months are certainly dreary, and little or nothing to do to break the monotony of tramping a round; but I will deal with the summer months first. During that period of the year, if it were not for police on duty all night long, I am afraid our beautiful Park would soon be little better than a common lodging-house. The small or foot gates are closed at ten p.m., the principal or carriage gates at twelve midnight; the constable on duty at each of them remains until half-past twelve, to allow vehicles or pedestrians that may have entered just before twelve o'clock to leave the Park. The gates are finally locked at half-past twelve. The constable on night duty going round his beat frequently finds loungers either asleep or feigning sleep. These he gets rid of at the nearest gate, and I can safely say within an hour of the gates being closed the Park is quite clear. But would it be if it were not for him constantly going round his beat and keeping on the alert? Judging from the number of these characters that are eagerly waiting soon after daybreak about the Marble Arch, Apsley and Albert Gates, to get into the Park at the authorised five o'clock time, I have every reason to believe it would have been waste of time to turn them out, if it had been left to them to return if they liked unmolested; they would have found ways and means to get back if they dared.

I have often felt amused on the opening of the above gates to see the rush (Monday mornings especially), to say nothing of the respectable working man who is also waiting to get across, going to or seeking employment. But first and foremost are the "topper hunters," as we

designated them. Immediately the gates were open they rush in and extend in all directions like skirmishers. Of course they pick up all they can find from underneath and about the seats and chairs, but their chief search is for the ends of cigars or cigarettes, commonly called toppers; these they gather in their handkerchiefs, and having obtained a sufficient quantity are able to dispose of them somewhere in the East End of London I believe. A strange way of obtaining an existence, but it is so. Then there are to be carefully watched the rare shrubs, plants and flowers that adorn the Park. Out of the hundreds and thousands of people who come every Sunday and admire these lovely sights, very few have any idea of the anxiety and work the police have to keep these free from marauders. Of course, there are other London parks equally laid out and not protected by police; possibly so, but you must consider there is no other park (at least I believe not) kept open so late thereby giving considerably greater facility to any evilly-disposed person. All I can say is, they are zealously looked after, and anyone caught (which not infrequently happens) is, I am glad to say, severely dealt with by the magistrates; a more despicable theft I cannot conceive—as it is robbing the thousands of people, young and old, who come into the Park, and who never have any other opportunity of seeing flowers or shrubs in bloom.

A rather amusing case that I know of in regard to these depredations was the audacity of a Soho French restaurant keeper, who several mornings came to the Park and succeeded in gathering a handful of blooms from the beds of the Flower Walk, and which he took home to adorn his dining-room tables. Despite the alertness of the uniform constables—who almost immediately missed them each successive morning—the perpetrator could not be discovered. Bed after bed in some part or other of the walk was practically shorn of its beauty. As I have previously remarked, late in the evening or night was an anxious time to us in preventing these thefts, for, when committed, it was invariably then; but for them to disappear on a summer's morning in broad daylight was rather a mystery. Consequently

other tactics had to be adopted. So, very shortly, one morning Monsieur entered the Park on his bicycle at about half-past five o'clock, which, I suppose, had been his wont on previous occasions, thereby evading suspicion—no doubt a nice quiet time, he thought. He leisurely proceeded down the roadway that runs alongside the Flower Walk and parallel with Park Lane, and at a favourable opportunity jumped off his machine and over the short iron fencing, supplies himself with his usual bouquet—the work of half a minute—and is off. A ragamuffin-looking man who had been lounging on a seat close by and saw what had occurred, rushed into the roadway and stopped him. "Vat do you stop me, you dirty scamp?" demanded Monsieur. "You can call me what you like," replied the man, "but I am a police officer, and shall take you into custody for stealing those flowers." The consternation of the Frenchman at this extraordinary-looking police officer can be more easily imagined than described, but to the station he had to go, and there he had the cool cheek to tell the Inspector he did not think he was doing any harm, for he had done so several times before, and had not been interfered with. This was a gratifying admission, for it left little doubt as to who the miscreant was, the consequence being Monsieur received the full benefit of the fine (five pounds) at Marlborough Street Police Court. He remarked, "It vas a lot of money to pay for such few flowers." Yes, very likely; but taking into consideration the mean offence committed in obtaining them, he richly deserved all it cost him, so possibly for the future he will find he can invest his money to better advantage in flowers at Covent Garden Market.

As I have already stated, the winter months are somewhat monotonous; still the same police *régime* is in force as in the summer, as there are other items to be looked after which I could relate, but I think I have said enough on night duty.

XI.—FOGS.

HAVING referred to events relative to Spring, Summer and Winter, and even Autumn, although perhaps not having specially mentioned the fact, I will try and make my little work as complete as I am able in dealing with Hyde Park all the year round, so will just make a few observations as to how we get along during dreary, foggy November—not that fog strictly confines itself to visiting us during that particular month alone, but as a matter of fact we are not surprised to get a plentiful supply of that objectionable mixture at this period of the year. I cannot recall any special occurrence consequent on fog, for the simple reason that Hyde Park is conspicuous by the absence of its usual frequenters, riding, driving, and even walking (with few exceptions), as though by common consent giving it a wide berth. From individual experience I must say I do not blame them, for a more dismal, deceptive place during such weather can scarcely be imagined, at least it appeared so to me. I, myself, after traversing the Park for twenty years and over, would naturally be supposed to know every inch of the place, and could safely walk about so to speak blindfolded; and I would be inclined to think I could have done so. However, be that as it may, all I can say is that in a dense evening fog I have to confess, that a stranger who had never put foot in the place before would not be at much greater loss to find their way than I; a pitch dark night was a treat comparatively, so far as finding one's way about was concerned—for this simple reason, we carried our "bull's-eye" lantern on our belt, and when occasion required to turn on the light, by just giving the reflector a twist, the surroundings for a dozen or twenty yards would be lit up all of aglow; but not so in a dense

evening fog, the radiant little "bull," illuminating though it may be in pitchy darkness, yet through this murky stuff you were lucky if it penetrated at most a couple of yards. Familiar spots appear so totally different, strange and fantastic objects seem to rise in front of one, occasioned by the clouds of drifting fog; in fact it gave one the creeps, especially should it be accompanied with frost, the damp clammy coldness seemed to penetrate to one's very bones. There is also such an unnatural sort of stillness as you grope your way slowly along, in order to keep the right footpath and avoid barking your shins against the low sharp rails that edge the numerous paths, or from coming into sudden contact with an iron post or hurdle, and after considerable straining of eyes and puzzling of brain in this manner, in order to arrive at a particular place, by some chance or other you all at once discover that you are going in quite an altogether opposite direction. One's feelings in such a predicament may be more easily imagined than described.

In speaking of myself I believe I am only relating what is similarly experienced by others. The only advice I can offer to anyone who should find themselves in such difficulties is that it is utterly useless to attempt to retrace one's steps; the safest and quickest way in the end is to continue as straight and careful as one is able to proceed, and eventually some way of egress will be found from the Park, even should it have taken you considerably out of your ordinary route, but to twist and turn about means loss of time, and most probably a fall over the low rails into the bargain. Another danger which should be borne in mind in crossing the Park in a dense fog is the Serpentine, for in many instances people have walked into the water—not that I am aware of a case that proved fatal owing to the mistake made, but in all probability such a thing may have happened. One instance I recollect. A young man walked into the water, and in attempting to regain *terra firma* he found he was going considerably deeper; he had the good sense to stand perfectly still, and commenced shouting "Help!" Old Mr. Smith, for many years the Serpentine water-fowl keeper, attracted by

the cry, went out of his lodge adjacent to the lake, obtained the assistance of a policeman, went in search and discovered the terrified young fellow just up to his knees in water, and whom they promptly helped out. Not a bad idea on his part, I consider, to take the precaution he did; such presence of mind might help someone else placed in similar straits.



XII.—CYCLING IN THE PARK.

IN writing my reminiscences of police duty in Hyde Park, I feel I should not perhaps be altogether completing my undertaking to omit—if only a few remarks on the subject of the bicycling season, or rather the bicycle “craze,” as it was more appropriately termed, and which undoubtedly it proved to be; for, like the proverbial donkey’s gallop, it was short and sweet. One brief season—and it vanished as quickly as it sprang up! As a matter of fact, I was somewhat undecided about referring to the event at all.

However, for the little while it did exist it certainly caused no small talk, and looked at one time to even vie with the Row in popularity.

The Ring Road, from the Achilles Statue, Hyde Park Corner, to the Magazine, was the selected track,—a nice level straight run of about a mile—and soon after ten o’clock in the morning, cyclists—chiefly ladies—made their appearance from all directions, and by eleven o’clock that portion of the roadway was simply thronged with them; for carriage traffic or equestrians it was almost impossible to get through, at all events dangerous to attempt, consequently they were advised to proceed by other routes. At every crossing constables were posted to assist foot passengers over the roadway—no easy matter to accomplish, either for the policeman himself or for those he was escorting. To pass safely through those rapid, silent wheels—no putting one’s hand up and promptly stopping them like the ordinary carriage traffic—it was a case of getting over the best way one possibly could.

I was fortunate enough to escape without getting knocked down myself, but I believe it was more by luck than judgment—judgment was out of the question, for in getting out of the way of one you were in that of another—it was sheer dodging to and fro. My post was at the crossing directly opposite the Achilles Statue, the turning point of the track, and the cutting and twisting

and incessant tinkling of bells around you kept one in a state of fever heat. I have done duty on every conceivable crossing on the Row and carriage-way in the Park, and positively assert I would a thousand times rather do four hours of that duty in the busiest of the season than the one hour and a half or two hours amid those enthusiastic cyclists; and when twelve o'clock came—the limit of the time extended to bicycles in the Park then—and they began to disperse, it was a great relief to be able to breathe freely once again, at least, that is expressing *my* feelings on the matter. It is needless for me to state that bicycles are now admitted to the Park at any time, like any other authorised vehicle. And why the display did not become one of the Park's annual attractions is more than I can account for; it certainly justified the then general impression that it was “merely a craze.”



XIII.—JUBILEE OF QUEEN VICTORIA.

THURSDAY, JUNE 23RD, 1887.—The great festival gathering in Hyde Park of London's School Children in celebration of the 50th year of the reign of Her Most Gracious Majesty the late Queen Victoria was a most notable day, and as far as the weather was concerned a most glorious one also. It will not be easily forgotten by old or young who were fortunate enough to be present at this event. It appeals more to the younger generation, considering about 30,000 were regaled and entertained in celebration of the above auspicious occasion. Ten enormous marquees, besides many other minor tents, were pitched on the "Guards' Ground," or the north-east portion of the Park, for the accommodation of this multitude of children, where, at a given time, accompanied by their teachers, they all assembled and partook of a substantial repast. This concluded, a host of attractions and games of the fair and fête description were provided out in the open. Numerous ladies and gentlemen also rendered every possible assistance for their amusement, and, to add to their enjoyment, a peal of bells occasionally rang out merrily, at least a mechanical arrangement that produced the sound of bells, kindly lent and supplied by Sir Henry Irving from the Lyceum Theatre, having been previously utilised there in one of his plays. The arrival of H.M. the Queen on the ground, and the singing by the children of "The Old Hundredth" hymn, "God Bless the Prince of Wales" and "God Save the Queen"—accompanied by the Guards' and other regimental bands combined, under the conductorship of Lieut. Dan Godfrey—was a most impressive item in the day's programme. To detail the various interesting scenes and incidents in connection with that memorable day would be to fill a moderate-sized book; but that is not

my business even to attempt to do. But it will, I am sure, give satisfaction for me to state, so far as the police were concerned, nothing came under their notice that in any way marred the proceedings—not during the festivities at all events, and not until the children had all, with their “Jubilee Souvenir Cups” in their hands, gaily marched from the Park homewards—nothing whatever had up to that time occurred that would in any way tend to cause the slightest discomfort. But an incident, had it happened earlier in the day, might have caused considerable alarm and scare among the little ones. A heap of hay, straw, paper, broken crates and boxes—refuse of packages—had been piled up within no very great distance of the tents on the Bayswater side of the Park. Whether by accident or mischievous persons thinking a bonfire would add to the attractions of the evening was never ascertained, but certainly, a big blaze was soon in motion.

A detachment of the “K” division of police, who had been on duty in that vicinity all day long, and who would have in the ordinary course of events been well on their way home towards Bow, made strenuous efforts to stop the progress of the fire, but to no avail; the inflammable stuff, however, soon burnt itself out, and as soon as it became approachable the constables set to work and raked the burning wood out with sticks or anything they could apply for that purpose, scattered the embers, and literally stamped and trod the fire out, regardless of the damage it did to their boots. I was glad when things became tolerably quiet and everything apparently safe, that the poor fellows were able to proceed on their way home, for there is no doubt they had had a long, arduous day of it.

I may here remark, fire in the marquees during the evenings and nights prior to the eventful day was our great anxiety, and with this single isolated exception we congratulated ourselves things had gone off most satisfactorily.

In closing this little narrative, I cannot resist referring to the energetic action of Sir Edward Lawson (Lord Burnham), Chairman and chief promoter of that happy

event. He worked most indefatigably, and also took particular notice that other people worked too—for he was up and about the Park early and late during the whole of the preparations, the result being, to use the words of a gentleman who expressed his appreciation of that occasion, “Never was a festival more manifestly joyous, natural, satisfactory and genuine.”



XIV.—APPREHENSION OF “SWELL” THIEVES.

COMPLAINTS having come in of the loss of purses, watches, jewellery, etc., in the vicinity of Hyde Park Corner and Rotten Row—this sort of thing happened annually; but it is chiefly owing to the carelessness of the owner, who often leaves such articles on a chair or seat (purses most frequently), or dropping them, from not having been securely fastened to their person. But on this particular occasion, as there appeared an unusual number, we naturally came to the conclusion they were not all accidentally lost.

Accordingly two experienced detectives were applied for to investigate and keep observation on this locality. Sergeant Mott and another detective were deputed for this duty. I may add, with reference to Sergeant Mott, who was then stationed at King Street Station, Whitehall—our head divisional quarters, my knowledge of him was, as being a most clever, astute detective officer; he had an eye like a hawk. But to continue. It was in the month of June—the height of the season—and about six o'clock in the evening. The Park was in full swing, the sides of the Row were thronged, and the carriage traffic was simply packed and only moving at a walking pace. I had just come up the side of the Row from the direction of Albert Gate, and was standing alongside one of the trees that run through the centre of the path, directly opposite the clock at Hyde Park Corner. I remained some few minutes satisfying myself things were apparently going on all right, and was just about to make my way over the crossing to see how the constables were getting on who were busily engaged with the traffic and assisting people across, when someone touched me on the elbow, and said quietly, “Don’t go away, Sergeant; we are just going to ‘tap’ someone.” I half turned round, and recognised Mott, and a yard or two away

stood the other detective. He returned to his colleague, with whom he appeared to have a few hurried subdued words.

During this little time I looked about me, though did not stir an inch; in fact, I was almost afraid to look, let alone stir, in case the slightest movement on my part might frustrate the officer's designs, so anxious was I that they should successfully accomplish their object. Yet, as I have stated, I did glance about me, but no individual could I see that aroused my slightest suspicion. I did not expect to see a thief of the Bill Sikes type, but I certainly expected to see someone who I at least thought they had fixed upon, but no one was near me only those whom I imagined belonged to "Society." In considerably less time than it takes to write these words, Mott returned, followed by the other officer, and, stooping down, spoke in an undertone to three gentlemen who were sitting on chairs directly in front of me. I did not hear what he said, but it was brief, and for the moment I wondered if he was asking them a question about something they may have seen or heard, or even lost; but to my astonishment he grasped two of the men each by the arm, the other officer seized the third—this was the signal for me, and I very soon relieved Mott of one. Their blanched faces, incoherent protestations and "feigned" indignation convinced me at once who they were. However, there was no scene, no scuffle or confusion; Mott, in his quiet but firm manner, had "fixed his right men," and told them they would have every opportunity of stating or giving an account of themselves at the police station; and through ranks of London Society we marched them. I should imagine it must have caused no little comment at the dinner-table that evening by those who witnessed this incident, for their "make-up" was simply complete—silk high hats, frock coats, dust coats on arm,* umbrella, etc., and I

* The idea of this class of thief carrying a dust-coat is, that apart from it aiding them in their "make-up," it is rather convenient in covering the arm and hand when relieving ladies, and even gentlemen, of the contents of their pockets, which they accomplish with amazing dexterity.

must say their under attire equally corresponded with their outer; for, after being charged, the process of stripping for searching and obtaining marks of identification, gave me the opportunity of observing this, evidently they had taken every precaution—if that one thing could have assisted them—in evading their profession, viz., thieves, which they undoubtedly were proved to be.

It may occur to some of my readers strange that these men should be arrested while sitting down quietly; why could they not have been watched until caught red-handed? I can only come to one conclusion on this matter; you must bear in mind the detectives had had these men under observation for hours—for days for all I know, almost stealthily dogging their actions while moving about among that fashionable crowd. I must here also point out, this class of thieves are equally as wary as they are clever at their profession, consequently the stratagem and tactics the detectives have to adopt to bring their quarry to bay is not my business to relate; I must leave the reader to the detectives alone who tell their experience in such cases. A detective officer and a uniform officer are distinct lines of police work altogether. One little knows the difficulty they have in tracking these cunning, light-fingered characters to justice, and I have but little doubt in this particular case they were a bit too "fly" to be caught, as I have said before, "red-handed," for by some chance one out of the three had caught the penetrating glance of Sergeant Mott's eye. That was enough; they "rumbled"—to adopt their slangy phraseology—upon scenting danger, the game was up. Then came the question—What was the best thing to do? To "bolt" or even stalk away would be to seal their fate; but to sit down quietly and brazen it out may possibly give them a chance, the "tecks" may have a doubt about them, or may wait another day in order to have them "on the job." Such thoughts as these undoubtedly were flashing through their minds. I need hardly add, if once these individuals could have got clear unmolested, Hyde Park would not have seen them again for many a day.

Mott knew this; that was the hurried conversation I witnessed between the two officers prior to the arrest. It was now or never, and rather than let them slip altogether he would have them on the minor charge—Suspected persons, etc., etc.

It was a big haul—three at one swoop, and I always considered great credit was due to Sergeant Mott for the tact and confidence he displayed in ridding the Park of a gang of such expert fashionable criminals.

I was once rather amused with the eulogy paid to this class of people by a gentleman. He was relating to me the loss of his valuable gold watch, which had been stolen—he had not the slightest doubt about it, he said. “But the mysterious way they got it from me is *astounding*. And it is not on account of its intrinsic value that I troubled, or they should have it for their cleverness; but being a present from my father on my twenty-first birthday, I would give double the value for its recovery. But there,” said he, continuing, “I shall never see the watch again; and I believe, if they made up their minds to do it, they would take the very teeth out of your head.” Of course, that was putting it rather strong. Still, as to their cleverness there is no doubt, and it behoves one to be most cautious with valuables, in crowds particularly.

In concluding this subject, it is perhaps just as well not to lose sight of the fact that there are roaming about some most clever professional “female thieves,” not that I am aware of any particular case in the Park of a woman being charged with having committed, or even suspected, of theft—not in the daytime among the fashionable, at all events. I am inclined to think these ladylike-looking “prigs” confine their manipulative “business” chiefly to the pockets of their own sex, while travelling in omnibuses, tramcars, etc., and not infrequently while standing about looking in shop windows.

XV.—A REMARKABLE FIND.

THE tracing and restoring of lost and found property in the Park is an important item of police duty.

It has been my lot to make many hundreds of enquiries respecting lost and found articles. It may be surprising to know what a number of things (valuable ones) are annually found by the police or are handed over to them and never claimed. Many people lose their property, and upon discovering their loss will say, "Oh, it is of no use bothering about it, I shall never get it again." It is a mistake to always jump at these conclusions. Of course, on the other hand, a great many people report their loss and never hear a word more of it. The police cannot be always looking about for things dropped or left on seats or chairs, they have other business to attend to; and the reader must remember there are persons who simply do nothing else but prowl about the Park all day long for what they can find. Still the police do find things, or, as I have said before, have things handed over to them. Only quite recently in the summer I was passing through the Park, and had occasion to stop and ask a question of a constable. At the same moment a gentleman came up and handed over to him a lady's beautiful gold watch he had just picked up, monogram, etc., on back, the value of which could not be less than £8 or £10. But to proceed with my own experiences. On one occasion I found a purse with silver and gold in, and a receipt for an advertisement in a daily paper; this was something for me to work upon. I made enquiries at the office of that particular newspaper, the *Morning Post*, and was courteously furnished with the name and address of the advertiser, a poor domestic servant girl out of a situation, to whom I restored her loss. She, of course, had given it up without making the slightest enquiry.

But my chief reason for referring to such events is to relate a "find" which happened during my time, but from the almost incredibleness I am doubtful if such a

thing hardly happens in a generation. The finding of a pocket-book, purse or bag containing large amounts in bank-notes, or even gold, are, as we all know, not an infrequent occurrence in some part or other of London; but to walk along a public footpath and see fifty-three sovereigns strewn underneath and about a seat would almost tend to take one's breath away. Yes, fifty-three bright golden sovereigns scattered about as if they were of no more value than so many acorns. This was actually discovered by a police constable on night duty in Kensington Gardens, at the top of the Flower Walk, immediately opposite the Albert Memorial. What he must have thought when he flashed his light upon them goodness only knows, but one thing certain, it must have been, "Oh, what a surprise!" and one can quite understand if the officer did not have some misgivings as to the genuineness of the coins. However, he gathered them up and took them to our station, where they were all proved to be current coin of the realm. Even now in this case it remained a mystery (for a long time I am sure) how they came there, and I am not certain if ever they were claimed at all, but that portion of information I am not in possession of, but the finding of the amount in the way I have described is without a doubt, and can be authenticated by the record in the Occurrence Book at Hyde Park Police Station.



XVI.—THE SERPENTINE.

THE Serpentine—world-wide known as it is (by name)—its particulars, viz., its source of supply, length, width, depth, etc., very few perhaps are acquainted with. In commencing this book I stated it was not my intention to attempt to describe “attractions,” by which I mean permanent fixtures, in the Park; but having had to perform duty on its banks and surface (and even in the water itself)* in many various ways, I hope I may be excused in deviating a little from my ordinary incidents by giving a brief description of this beautiful central London lake. Of course, there is another Serpentine besides the one in Hyde Park, namely, Regent’s Park. At least, it was called so years ago. I remember when a boy reading of an awful ice fatality on “The Serpentine, Regent’s Park,” when many persons (nearly fifty, so I am informed) lost their lives. A vein of humour was introduced into this sad occurrence by the unconcerned demeanour of a man who sat quietly smoking his pipe on a mass of floating ice in the middle of the water until he was rescued.

However, there is no fear of such a calamity happening again, as the lake has been considerably shallowed and reconstructed since, and I believe is now generally known as the “Ornamental Waters,” Regent’s Park. So, I suppose, as a matter of fact, there is only one recognised Serpentine, and that is in Hyde Park.

The full extent of this sheet of water from end to end is fifteen hundred yards; from east bridge to west bridge is just a thousand yards, the remainder, which proceeds into Kensington Gardens, makes up the distance stated. It varies in its width gradually, the greatest being a hundred and eighty yards, the lesser

* The writer having on three different occasions rescued women from drowning.

about fifty; it is shaped in a zig-zag form, thereby deriving its name Serpentine. The depth I have already referred to in a former chapter. Yet it may not be out of place here to again remind the reader on that particular matter. It is of vital importance that persons using this lake for such recreation as boating, bathing and skating should be impressed as to the depth of water he or she may be venturing upon—in the case of the latter especially, for it must be borne in mind that this lake undoubtedly (for various reasons) has an exceptional attraction, and, once open to the public for that exhilarating diversion, they do not come in companies but in battalions, consequently the depth, which varies from five to fourteen feet of water—to say nothing of the probability of a foot or two of mud—cannot be too seriously taken into consideration. The winter ninety four-five was a “nipper,” in fact we have not had such a severe one since*—at any rate not a continuation of frost to admit of the full extent of the lake being thrown open. On that occasion, I have stood on the bank in the evenings and watched the ice bending and heaving under the enormous strain placed upon it, until a very unpleasant sort of a feeling has crept over me. One Sunday evening in particular I shall never forget, the suspense was almost painful, so fully aware was I of the appalling loss of life that must inevitably happen, should the ice give way.

If fifty persons can be drowned in a lake of no greater depth or expanse than this one, and in broad daylight, what are we to anticipate must follow should a similar disaster occur here on a dark night, with probably ten times the number of persons than upon the fatal occasion I have previously referred to? . . . I think it is a matter for grave consideration.

Of course there are notice boards to warn people of the depth, but people do not always stop to read notice boards even in the daytime, let alone in the dark evenings, when it would be impossible. Therefore I take this opportunity to point out the danger risked in being

* *i.e.* up to the winter of 1908-9.

too venturesome. Most lamentable incidents I could relate, not only upon the ice, but in boating and bathing, in consequence.

As to the source of the Serpentine, I could not state if it has springs in its bed or not, but artificially it is supplied at each end by the water being pumped from wells, one in Kensington Gardens, the other in St. James's Park. There are plenty of fish in this lake, of the coarse species—roach, dace, chub, eels, etc. On a warm evening I have seen the sides of the water literally boiling with them; the boys know this, and they often steal a few minutes fishing, which of course is against the rules of the Park, this they often rue by having to attend a summons before the magistrate.

In speaking of fishing, I had an adventure once on the Round Pond, Kensington Gardens, a few years ago, before it was cleaned out and shallowed. There were plenty of fish there, of the class I have already mentioned.

This "basin-shaped" pleasant sheet of water, some seven hundred yards in circumference, and directly opposite Kensington Palace, is well known—to nursemaids and children without a doubt, for it is constantly surrounded, either in feeding the swans and ducks, or the more senior members of the family are engaged in the favourite amusement of sailing their model yachts or boats across the pond. Of an evening just before the gates close sometimes a number of these small craft get becalmed and considerably out of reach of the owners, the consequence being they had to proceed home minus their treasure, which I hardly need add sorely tried their young feelings, and we could only console the little fellows by saying it would probably be restored to them the next day by applying at Hyde Park police station, for usually during the night a breeze would spring up, and the whole fleet be found stranded in the morning. It was not an unusual thing during the summer months to see the policeman going off night duty with as many of these "abandoned" vessels as he could comfortably carry. The same system is, I believe, adopted by the present Park constables in taking charge

of these articles—other than bringing them to us they deposit them at their own office adjoining the police station, Hyde Park.

But to proceed with my fishing story. I was on night duty. It was in the month of August (if I recollect rightly), at any rate it was a Sunday night preceding a Bank holiday—possibly it may have been the Whitsun holiday; however, that matters but little. By some means it had got into a local weekly newspaper—either Kensington or Bayswater neighbourhood, that fishing would be permitted in the Round Pond on this particular Bank holiday. I had met someone during the early part of the night who intimated this announcement to me, however, not having been apprised by my superiors of any such notification, I treated it for what it was worth, doubting if it had happened at all. Eventually the time came round to open the gates. I commenced about four o'clock (I was the only constable on duty in the gardens that night), so as to have the last opened by five a.m., the authorised time. To walk quite three miles round the Gardens and open between twenty and thirty gates one could scarcely be expected to start much later. This done, out of curiosity I strolled towards the pond. Up to that time I had not seen a sign of a fisherman, so I did not feel in the least alarmed; but on my emerging through the trees on the Kensington side of the Gardens, imagine my consternation on beholding round the pond no less than thirty or forty persons, all busily engaged in preparing their rods and tackle, and some even had commenced angling and having sport, for I saw them pulling the fish out. Ladies even were there with camp-stools, luncheon baskets, etc., evidently they were bent upon having a good day of it. I set to work and demanded to know from the first party I came to, upon what authority were they taking such a liberty with the regulations. They referred me to the paper I have mentioned. I replied that, not having received any official instructions on the matter, my duty was to stop them. They protested it was "all right." I persisted it was not "all right," and took out my pocket-book, and, I am sure, wrote down a dozen names and

addresses, and the more I wrote the more there appeared to be arriving on the scene. I thought to myself, I am just about as much use here as not at all, so sent information to the police station of what was going on, and very soon half-a-dozen men in blue arrived, whose presence quickly had the effect of conveying to these ardent anglers they were under some "misapprehension," and they quietly, but most disappointedly, packed up. One enthusiastic piscator, I remember, judging from his appearance, came from the slums of Notting Hill on the strength of the information obtained from the "local organ," openly defied the police. He had his fishing-rod, which consisted of a long trimmed garden pea-stick, wrested from him by a constable, and had the mortification of seeing it broken up and thrown into the pond. Firm measures had to be taken, or the place would have been overrun by such characters. However, it gradually passed off quietly without any magisterial proceedings, as the transgressors, I need hardly state, were the victims of a hoax!

It may be of interest to say that the boundary line which divides the two parishes of St. George, Hanover Square, and St. Margaret's, Westminster, runs through the centre of the Serpentine, Hyde Park—the north portion belonging to the former, the south to the latter. I have seen the schoolboys of the Westminster parish, accompanied by the officials, performing the old-fashioned custom of "beating the boundary" with long sticks. They commence at the east bridge, where, about the middle, just above the water-level, the mark is to be seen. For some few seconds they would shout and thrash this particular spot unmercifully. They then proceed in boats in a direct line to the west bridge to the other boundary mark, where I suppose a similar ceremony is gone through.

NOTE.—The subject of loss of life by drowning has been seriously attended to in the above chapter; therefore I would like to take the opportunity to say that it has just come under my notice that "a more simple and efficient method of artificial respiration to the apparently drowned" has been discovered by Professor Schäfer, and strongly advocated by "The Royal Life Saving Society," also by the Police. The Royal Humane Society, however, strictly adheres to the "Silvester" method, and as to which of the two is the most effectual opinion appears to be divided. Yet it is well worth knowing there are two such invaluable life restoratives, and each by such scientific men as Dr. Silvester and Dr. Schäfer.

XVII.—“ROYALTY IN THE PARK.”

I HAVE in other chapters alluded to Her Most Gracious Majesty the late Queen Victoria driving through Hyde Park on her return journey from Buckingham Palace to Windsor Castle, and the immense interest displayed by the record attendance of people in the Park, consequent upon that rare occasion. Of course, apart from this, Her Majesty was very frequently in the Park during her short stay in London—in fact, I should imagine the Queen was most fond of Hyde Park, for I have known her drive out both morning and afternoon; even should she have held a Drawing Room the same day, she was out as soon after as possible. It was not an uncommon occurrence for Her Majesty, upon terminating her morning drive in the Park, to enter Rotten Row, usually at the end near Kensington Gardens, and drive down the centre among the riders to Hyde Park Corner—the carriage and double pair of splendid bays, ridden by scarlet and gold liveried postilions, Her Majesty's Scotch attendants in Highland costume being seated behind—a carriage in the Row was a novelty to witness, the Queen being the only personage that I am aware of that could command the right of driving along that fashionable ride.

I would now also be pleased to write a little of what I know in regard to our present gracious and beloved Queen Alexandra's attachment to the Park. Of course, I have to confine my experiences to the period when Her Majesty was Princess of Wales, and I must ask pardon if I occasionally refer to Her Majesty by the title she then bore.

Many hours of duty at Hyde Park Corner, just inside the Apsley Gates, have I done, both among the carriage traffic and at the side of the Royal entrance—the centre gate—to prevent too enthusiastic admirers of Her Royal Highness pressing near her carriage as she entered or left the Park, this particular spot being a “vantage ground” for those on foot obtaining a view of “The Princess,” as she was familiarly referred to.

I can safely say that, should Her Royal Highness be in town, and if no engagement or important function

prevented her, scarcely a day during the season but some time between four and six o'clock the Princess, accompanied by one or more of her daughters, in their stately carriage and pair, would enter the Park by the entrance I have already mentioned, and, should the Park be very full, preceded by a mounted police constable, was driven up and down the centre of the long ranks of carriages, gracefully bowing her acknowledgments to the numerous salutations of respect and homage which all were so anxious to pay her. And however often Her Royal Highness attended, there never was the slightest abatement in the enthusiasm shown, from the highest to the humblest. Once inside the Park, not a carriage or person would appear to me to leave until she had finally taken her departure. And questions such as—"Policeman, will the Princess come this way again?" "How long will she remain?" "Which gate will the Princess leave the Park by?" etc., etc., one was assailed with on all sides.

One old lady, in particular, I shall never forget: very grey, quaintly dressed, but neat and genteel, tall and thin, upright as a reed, and as active as a young antelope, judging from the manner in which she could pop about. Most regularly she would come, and most persistently push herself to the front, and all our remonstrating with her as to the danger she was incurring, of being knocked down by the horses or carriage, was of no avail—she *would not* be denied from making her dignified bow to the Princess as she entered or left the Park, so much so that H.R.H.'s attention was particularly attracted towards this constant and enthusiastic old soul, and she became quite interested, and caused enquiries to be made concerning her.

I would here point out that Royalty are so everlastingly being pestered by fanatical and all sorts of crack-brained people, in one way and another, that it becomes them to be most careful to whom they give encouragement or pay any special attention to. Although, in this particular case—troublesome to us though she was—we had no doubt whatever but that it was genuine enthusiasm on the part of the old dame.

Yet enquiries were instituted regarding her, resulting that H.R.H. was assured of the old lady's thorough respectability, and that it was purely love and devotedness towards Her Royal Highness that so animated the old creature's feelings and actions. So, to crown her happiness, very shortly afterwards a favourable opportunity offered itself; for, while driving in the Park one morning, Her Royal Highness caught sight of the old lady taking her walk on the footpath alongside the Ring Road, a nice quiet part of the Park. Taking advantage of this, H.R.H. stopped; and fortunately, in attendance upon Her Royal Highness, was Col. the Hon. Oliver Montagu, who, I regret to say, has since passed away, but I would like to add, was for so long, and up to the time of his death, her trusted and faithful Equerry, a favourite in the private family circle of the Prince and Princess, and I believe—and am pleased to say my knowledge of him quite justifies that belief—the most esteemed and greatest personal friend of Her Royal Highness that ever lived. He, at her request, alighted from the carriage, and made the announcement to the old lady that Her Royal Highness would be pleased to speak to her; but, in fact, to use the Colonel's exact words, he smilingly said, "Would you *like* to speak to the Princess?" Of course she would like to speak to the Princess—he knew that very well; still, it was in his usual affable manner he so addressed her—it was her greatest desire on earth, and that she should ever realize that desire—well, she had not even dreamt. So her joy knew no bounds, and she was quickly at the side of the carriage, from which H.R.H. graciously spoke a few kind words, asking after her health, and remarking how very frequently she saw her in the Park; then, expressing hopes that she might long enjoy the best of health, and continue to take her walk in the Park, Her Royal Highness wished her "good morning."

With this unexpected honour the old lady was highly delighted, and for many a long day afterwards related the incident to anyone who might happen to be standing near her while waiting at Hyde Park Corner to see the "Princess."

It was not unusual in the morning for Her Royal Highness to go for a quiet drive in her phaeton and pair; accompanied only by her servant, she would almost unobserved go all round the Park. It was on one of these "quiet" drives that Her Royal Highness was once instrumental in averting what may have turned out to be a serious carriage accident in the Park. Although not in the morning, it was early in the afternoon, and some considerable time before the Park would become full. Her Royal Highness was being driven in her victoria and favourite pair of beautiful greys, accompanied by one of her daughters—I believe the present Princess Royal—and was proceeding along the carriage drive from the direction of Hyde Park Corner towards Kensington Gardens, at the entrance gate of which stands a policeman on duty. Upon the carriage arriving at this gate, Her Royal Highness directed her coachman to pull up, and with a slight wave of her hand beckoned the officer, who with a salute quickly approached the side of the carriage. Leaning forward, Her Royal Highness very impressively, but in her accustomed gentle manner, said: "Constable, I have just passed a carriage coming this way in which there are two ladies, and one of the wheels appear to me to be in a most dangerous condition, and I am afraid an accident may happen to them; will you please call their attention to the matter." The constable thanked Her Royal Highness, and promised to fulfil her wish, and for that purpose took up his stand in the middle of the roadway to await the approaching vehicle, which was now in sight, and which the Princess was most careful to point out before proceeding on her drive.

Now comes the most amazing portion of this incident. The constable, as I have already stated, placed himself in the roadway, and when the carriage, which contained two elderly ladies, came within a few yards, he put up his hand to the coachman, who brought it to a standstill. The constable thereupon lost no time in imparting the news to its occupants of the jeopardy they were being exposed to, and also that they owed this important information to no other personage than

H.R.H. the Princess of Wales. What with the alarm at their imminent danger, and the surprise at their illustrious informant, they were not a little disconcerted; but they very quickly managed to make their exit out of the old conveyance. After a survey of the defective wheel, the coachman was instructed to proceed home with all possible care and caution with the empty vehicle, and, giving the horses a slight touch with the whip, he started off with the intention of obeying these orders; but they had not gone more than half a dozen yards when there was heard a crash! and the off hind-wheel of the old ramshackle landau went to pieces; spokes, splinters, and the various portions of wood that composed the wheel fled in all directions, the tyre wobbled to the side of the roadway, and, as may be supposed, the whole concern generally collapsed, to the consternation of the late occupants. But what *must* have happened had the horses and carriage, with its owners, been proceeding at ordinary speed? personal injury, serious or slight, would have most assuredly attended the accident; even should the horses be only going at a common jog-trot pace, they would, as in most cases of the sort, have taken fright, become unmanageable, and dragged the vehicle some considerable distance. In such an event the consequence could only have ended in one thing—disaster. On the other hand, the coachman may have succeeded in pulling up the horses, and the ladies escape with simply a shaking and a few slight bruises. All this, of course, is a matter for conjecture; but the smash-up was inevitable sooner or later, had it not been for the quick perception and prompt action of Her Royal Highness, to whom the ladies expressed at the very earliest opportunity their most grateful thanks.

NOTE.—At the commencement of this chapter I referred to the "Centre" of the Apsley Gates as the Royal entrance. Strictly speaking this is so, as all other than Royal carriages or Royal conveyances must enter by one or other of the two side gates. Yet the Regulations are that the Centre Gate is a general exit for all vehicles admitted—Royal or otherwise.

The only Carriage Gate in Hyde Park that is reserved for the exclusive use of Royalty is the Centre Gate of the Marble Arch; in fact, it is opened only on the day when the "Sovereign" is in, or may be expected to arrive in London.

XVIII.—DOG MUZZLING.

“ When Constabulary duty's to be done—to be done,
A Policeman's lot is not a happy one—happy one! ”

SO sings the policeman in Sullivan's "Pirates of Penzance," and I really think I never had a greater realization of those words than when the "rabies," or dog muzzling order, was so rigorously enforced, I believe some time in the 'eighties. In many instances I am afraid it brought the police into rather unfavourable popularity, for the order was most rigidly carried out—rich and poor, big dogs and little dogs, had all alike to knuckle under. As to its beneficial results to the general public there can be no doubt; for people must bear in mind that, apart from the "muzzling order" insuring the public safety against a dog (however well cared for) that may become rabid at any moment, especially so during what are known as "the dog days," it further had the effect of clearing the parks and streets of hundreds of half-starved mangy mongrels that had hitherto been roaming about at large, to the common danger of possibly communicating that terrible malady hydrophobia—of course, that is not to say but what the police are "constantly" taking the precaution to seize homeless and stray dogs—still I would like to impress the fact, that the order, when in force, facilitated the clearance of a considerable greater number of these undesirable curs. Consequently the temporary trifling inconvenience caused by having to comply with this "order" surely is more than adequately compensated for. At the same time it did appear to me to be almost an absurdity to be constantly having to request a lady or gentleman to keep a dog muzzled, although no bigger than a cat, say for instance a toy Skye or fox terrier; but however ridiculous it may have appeared—as they frequently retorted, "duty had to be done."

I had occasion once to make such a request to the late Sir Henry Irving while walking in the Green Park with his little dog. I have always remembered the incident on account of the jocular observation the great actor made to me. Having politely called his attention to the order, Sir Henry stopped, and said very good-humouredly, "Who made this order?" I replied, "The Chief Commissioner." "Indeed," said he; "I don't think the Chief Commissioner knows what he is talking about." That opinion I did not attempt to discuss, for Sir Henry readily applied the necessary article on the little dog's head, and continued his walk round the Park. I need hardly state, it was not everyone so requested who would be quite so agreeable.

So many owners of dogs appear to imagine that once inside the Park they were at liberty to remove its headgear, and allow it to have a free run. I suppose it was only natural, after all, they should have this consideration for their canine friends or pets; unfortunately for them, however, the law did not extend such consideration, for there is no more reason to believe why a dog should not become mad in the parks as in the streets. Hence invariably the unpleasant altercation between policeman and owner.

One case I remember well. I was rather pathetically impressed at the grief of a little five-year-old boy, who, in company with his governess in Hyde Park one morning, had their dog taken away from them by a policeman. Singular to relate, it was a little son of the late First Commissioner of Royal Parks and Gardens—Lord Windsor (Earl of Plymouth). But in this case they had omitted to bring even the muzzle with them, forgotten it—or were perhaps unconscious of the order; at any rate, the dog was promptly seized by a constable, who, as I appeared on the scene, was leading it off towards the police station. What most attracted my attention was the agitated state of the governess and distress of the little fellow at the apparent loss of their companion. I approached them, and would gladly have endeavoured to console their feelings by explaining that the seizure would only be temporary, and presently things would

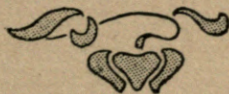
be all right. But the governess would not give me the opportunity, for, taking hold of the little boy's hand—I can now recall seeing him in his "kilt suit" sobbing bitterly—she rushed out of the Park at Grosvenor Gate, in the direction of home, as though her very life depended upon it, presumably to impart the news to her master or mistress. I sharply followed after the constable, and upon overtaking him I said, "Who does the dog belong to?" at the same time stooping down, I examined the plate on its collar, where engraved was the name Lady Windsor, etc., etc. There was, however, no alternative but for doggie—a little, short-legged, timid-looking creature, if I remember rightly, what we would describe as a "Daschund"—to go through the usual process. The constable was only carrying out his duty, but I took steps that no time was lost in a message being sent to the residence of her ladyship to inform her that upon the production of a muzzle and payment of the authorised fee at the police station, Hyde Park, the dog would be given up to her or those who represented her. It is scarcely necessary to state this was immediately complied with, and all ended amicably.

Of course there were pleasant as well as unpleasant encounters with the police and public in connection with dogs. Considering the length of time I was in Hyde Park, my reader cannot wonder but that I had many opportunities, in one way and another, of rendering service on behalf of that most sagacious animal, especially in the case of ladies, for many were the anxious faces I have seen come to make enquiries respecting the lost, strayed, or even stolen dogs; and many are the grateful thanks bestowed for enquiries made or information given, resulting in the restoration of their lost favourites. I could rake up many incidents that perhaps would be interesting in such cases. I will, however, conclude with a short story of the extraordinary friendliness shewn by a dog towards the police, for as a rule dogs do not like policemen, they always appeared to me to fight shy of us; I narrate this particular story because this dog was certainly an exception to the rule.

"Prince"—a beautiful Dalmatian (or as some people describe them, "carriage dogs") was brought in by a constable, apparently having lost itself among the busy traffic. His name, with name and address of owner—a lady residing in the neighbourhood of Lancaster Gate, Hyde Park,—were engraved on collar. He was taken down into the stable-yard and chained up, and information sent to the owner in the ordinary way. I think it is pretty generally known that the police do not, under any circumstances, restore lost dogs at the residences of their owners; they or their servants must attend at the police station. "Prince" was eventually sent for, and handed over. About a day or two afterwards he was brought in again by another constable, with the same formality. I am afraid my readers will credit me with "stretching it" to say he very shortly was brought in the third time; but most assuredly he was, and by a constable who stated the dog would not leave him, and that he had no alternative. This was getting beyond a joke, and I could not say who got tired first—we in communicating, or the owner in replying. Of one thing I am sure; not a week passed during that season without "Prince" giving us a visit. If no one would accompany him, he found his way alone into the station, and after a walk round through the various rooms, and, as we used to say, had "reported himself" and received a few pats and strokes from us, which he evidently appeared very much to appreciate, "Prince" would then quickly take his departure and trot off in the direction of home.

Finally, in closing this subject—for the information of owners or those in charge of dogs who may not happen to know—I will endeavour to briefly describe the appearance of dogs that become rabid, or are seized with fits (fits are most prevalent in the hot weather). I do not profess to be an expert on canine diseases, but I claim to have had a certain amount of experience with such cases in the Park, and possibly what I am able to state may not be without some helpfulness in alleviating or ending the sufferings of any unfortunate animal that may be so affected. The symptoms indicating a dog as

being rabid or (mad) are its excited rushing about, yelping, snapping, an unnatural glare of the eyes, and foaming at the mouth, and the sooner it can be destroyed the better for every one concerned. In the case of a dog seized with a fit, is that it usually drops on its side and rapidly works its legs as though running, occasionally pivoting its body round like a wheel. Buckets or cans of water liberally thrown or poured on the *head* I always found to be most effectual in restoring the dog to its natural state again.



XIX.—THE “GUARDS” AND “VOLUNTEERS.”

ALTHOUGH I am unable to give an elaborate or lengthy account of the movements of these distinguished bodies, I cannot refrain from giving a short chapter of my experience—having had on so many occasions to attend; for, as everyone knows, they are conspicuous figures in Hyde Park during the summer months, and as a matter of course the police are always in attendance to assist in keeping the ground, etc., on the occasion of reviews, inspections, and even ordinary battalion drills. The “Guards’ Ground” is the premier portion of the Park utilised for these spectacular displays—a fine, level expanse on the east side, and fronting Park Lane; superfluous to describe, as it is so familiarly known to be almost the exclusive property of the Foot Guards. The other drill ground is on the south or Knightsbridge side of the Park, and is known as “The Exhibition Ground,” named in consequence of it being the site of the Great Exhibition of 1851; a nice tract of ground, but not quite so extensive as the “Guards.” It is chiefly used by the Household Cavalry (which ever regiment may be quartered at Knightsbridge Barracks), also by different corps of rifle volunteers for their evolutions.

In referring to Knightsbridge Barracks I may mention that the band of the regiment plays selections of music in front of the officers’ quarters, which face Hyde Park, frequently during the season, usually at midday, and is considerably patronised by those riding, driving and walking. No military display of any particular magnitude happened during my service in the Park, but judging from what I have heard and read, there must have been some gigantic and imposing sights years ago.

An elderly gentleman in the Park once told me that he remembered seeing the old Duke of Wellington (to use his words) "Fight the Battle of Waterloo over again in Hyde Park." That must indeed have been an imposing sight, if such a thing ever happened. However, be that as it may, there is no doubt there is not the number of troops simultaneously paraded now as used to be in years past.

The great review of thirty thousand provincial volunteers in July, 1876, by H.M. the King when Prince of Wales, being the only approach that I am aware of. Of course we had the annual inspection, or "The Duke's Inspection" (Duke of Cambridge) as it was familiarly known, of the brigade of Guards, and was looked forward to as one of the principal events of the "Season." A more impressive and unique sight I never witnessed than the "March Past" of this magnificent column. The stirring music of the massed bands, playing to each regiment its respective favourite regimental tune or march—"The Grenadiers," "The British Grenadiers," "The Scots," "Bonnie Laddie," and so on, ranks straight as an arrow, firm and rigid, so to speak, as a brick wall, as company after company swept past the Duke surrounded by his brilliant staff, at the saluting point—that in itself was enough to make a lasting impression on one.

With reference to the volunteers. Saturday evenings during the months of May, June and July are occupied by the different corps in their Inspection Battalion drills, etc., and most tiresome duty it is to keep ground on these particular occasions, for there are so many children in the Park, in fact all ages and classes for that, and the constant encroaching and straggling about over the cleared space was not conducive to one keeping the best of tempers. Business being practically over for the week, a great number of people flock to the Park to see the Volunteers drill, both to the "Guards" and "Exhibition Grounds," the latter being a favourite place for the London Scottish and London Irish; the "Guards" being equally patronised by other corps; the 24th Middlesex

(Post Office) usually have their inspection Saturday mid-day on one of the above months on the Guards' ground. *The late Major-General Sir Henry Trotter for many years was Inspecting Officer to the various corps.



* In speaking of General Trotter, his high and able abilities as a Military Officer are too well known, and needs no reminding from me ; but I would just like to say—and I do so from personal experience—that a more genial gentleman, one could not wish to work for. It was not unusual for him—in order to accomplish a particular movement on the part of the troops to his satisfaction—to remain until the dusky hours began to set in. After making his final remarks to the officers and men, he seldom left the field without giving a word or two of thanks to the Police for their services in keeping the ground.

XX.—SOCIALIST RIOTS.

IN concluding this little book, I shall give a brief account of the "Battle of Hyde Park" as we policemen used to call it: that was during the Socialist Riots in 1887, most of my elder readers remember that anxious time in the West End of London. I have very good reason to remember it, for I received a serious injury to my back on that occasion, which confined me to my bed for some time. The looting of shops, and smashing windows, by these mobs of so-called unemployed or socialists, was not an infrequent occurrence. Take, for instance, only a short time prior to this, their riotous proceedings after leaving the Park, in North Audley Street, Grosvenor Square. We were, however, on this occasion determined that no want of precaution should result in a repetition of such wanton lawlessness.

On the 18th October, 1887, we had information that a large body of these men had left Trafalgar Square to march to Hyde Park to hold a meeting there, and at about 2 p.m. they began to come into the Park at Apsley Gate in large numbers, and proceeded to that part of the Park between Marble Arch and Grosvenor Gate, where they were addressed by their leaders for about two hours; it was then given out that they would have a "march round"—that meant parading through the streets, and squares, and they all, I should think not far short of a thousand, made a move across the Park in the direction of Victoria Gate. We went down that slope that lies about midway between Grosvenor and Victoria Gates. I don't forget hearing the cracking of the boughs from the trees as we proceeded along, and saw some of the scoundrels supplying themselves with cudgels, it then occurred to me mischief was brewing. I remarked this to another sergeant, whom I happened to be walking near; he said, "Yes, and we had better keep together, as there are not many of us."

I really don't think there were more than twenty police present when we started, but we soon got reinforced. There certainly were a few mounted constables, who had been on the alert near Grosvenor Gate, in readiness to accompany us, and these, on our moving off across the grass, trotted round the road and waited at Victoria Gate, where the crowd was expected to leave the Park. Upon our approach, and seeing the mounted men near the gate (Victoria), there appeared to be—from what cause I could not think at the time—a stampede and a general rush was made across the road to a small foot gate, known as Clarendon Gate, it is opposite Clarendon Place, Bayswater Road. I was anxious to get out with them in the event of their committing any depredation, but, simultaneously, the mounted men galloped up and barred their egress, in fact, with other foot constables, forced them back into the Park. In leaving the Park by this gate there is a slight incline of the path, which was iron-railed on each side. I had succeeded in getting a yard or two up this incline, but the pressure from the back and the blockade by police at the Gate fairly wedged us in for a few seconds; all was panic now, and a big rush was made back into the Park. It was at this critical moment I was injured, for the impetus was so great that about a dozen or more big fellows fell headlong on top of me and we all went to the ground. I was underneath, and I thought my back was broken. A brother Sergeant (Kebby) came to my assistance, and with a constable dragged me out, and placed me on a seat close by, where I became unconscious. He left the constable in charge of me and proceeded into the *melée*, where he, I was informed, very soon got roughly treated himself. Upon my coming to, things had become tolerably quiet, for the mob had rushed across to the more open part of the Park, but what attracted my attention was the number of old hats, sticks, stones, pieces of iron railings, etc., that laid about the paths and roadway. Evidently our men had been letting them have a hot time of it. I was asked if I would be conveyed to the Hospital, but I desired to go home, and was taken in a cab.

Perhaps a short paragraph from part of "The Daily Telegraph" on that occurrence will not be uninteresting, it will certainly convey more graphically, than I can, to my readers the sort of characters the Police had to deal with at that time.

"DAILY TELEGRAPH," *October 19th, 1887.*

"Led by the scarlet flag carried by a youth, the men trooped across the Park in the direction of Victoria Gate, singing the chorus of a song which the demonstrators had done their best to make popular. There was no regular formation, the men probably over a thousand in number, straggling as they pleased, and covering a wide area of ground. As soon as the move was manifest, the horsemen (mounted police) at Grosvenor Gate galloped round the row and headed off the men, whilst bodies of constables on foot were hurried along under cover of the trees. Foiled in their efforts to reach Victoria Gate, which would have afforded adequate means of egress, the crowd suddenly turned, thinking to outwit the police by quitting the Park by the two smaller gates into the Uxbridge Road opposite Clarendon Place and Albion Street. But the police officers were too quick for the undisciplined mob; Supt. Huntley had halted his men inside the Victoria Gate, which had led to the flank movement of the crowd, and more mounted patrols were already in the roadway by the time the foremost of the demonstrators arrived at the lesser exits mentioned, while inside the Park the constables were in the position to dispute the passage of procession. Consequently, when the roughs saw in front of them a body of policemen, outside as well as inside the railings, there was a general flight and a backward rush. About a dozen men went down in a heap, and others took advantage of the opportunity to assault the police, one of whom, Sergeant Owen 62 A. was so badly crushed, that he was incapacitated from further duty. Another Sergeant, Kebby 12 A., was twice beaten to the earth, and in the struggle he lost his helmet. Blows were dealt on all sides and blood flowed. The banner-bearer turned, ran across the

“ride and rallied his men to some extent in the open. Some of the ruffians seized the park chairs and converted them into formidable weapons. Others uprooted the iron hurdles and broke off the pronged feet for a similar purpose.”

Fortunately the ringleaders were apprehended and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment, and so far as Hyde Park was concerned nothing further took place in the way of riotous proceedings by Socialists, for very shortly afterwards came that memorable Sunday in Trafalgar Square, where they were finally smashed up by the police and military. I was not present, so cannot go into details, but there is no doubt that the Socialists received their *coup-de-grace* on that occasion, at all events. I was, as I have already stated, laid up for a few weeks, but I am thankful to say, I was able to return to duty again, and continued until I completed my full service, and was granted my pension at Hyde Park



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